



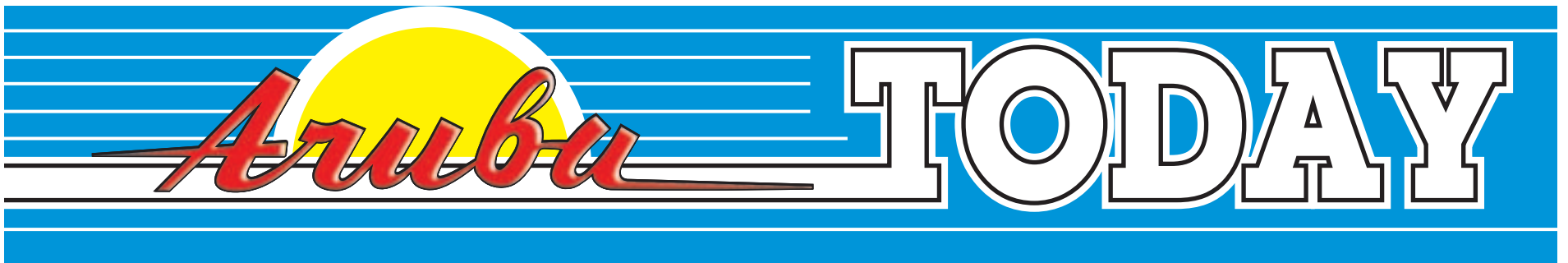
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On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: +297 582-7800 Thursday, February 19, 2015



Extreme Makeover

President Barack Obama speaks at the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism, Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015, in the South Court Auditorium of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House Complex in Washington.

(AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

Obama Outlines Programs To Counter Extremism

JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Muslims in the U.S. and around the world have a responsibility to fight a misconception that terrorist groups like the Islamic State speak for them, President Barack Obama said Wednesday in his most direct remarks yet

about any link between Islam and terrorism. For weeks, the White House has sidestepped the question of whether deadly terror attacks in Paris and other Western cities amount to "Islamic extremism," wary of offending a major world religion or lending credibility to the "war on terror"

that Obama's predecessor waged. But as Obama hosted a White House summit on countering violent extremism, the president said some in Muslim communities have bought into the notion that Islam is incompatible with tolerance and modern life.

"We are not at war with Islam," Obama said. "We are at war with people who have perverted Islam," he continued. While putting the blame on IS and similar groups — Obama said the militants masquerade as religious leaders but are really terrorists — the president also

appealed directly to prominent Muslims to do more to distance themselves from brutal ideologies. He said all have a duty to "speak up very clearly" in opposition to violence against innocent people.

Continued on page 3



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China holiday makes business, cultural waves around world

KELVIN CHAN
Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Decades ago the Chinese New Year holiday, also known as Spring Festival, had little impact outside of China. But as the country gained outsized economic influence, the holiday, which has enormous cultural significance in the Chinese-speaking world, has become more prominent. This is how it ripples around the world.

— FACTORY FREEZE

Chinese factories shut down for the holiday and then some, with hundreds of millions of migrant workers heading to their hometowns, part of the world's largest mass movement of people. In the lead up to the holiday, factories run flat out to fill orders before shutting.

The holiday itself runs from Feb. 18 to 24 this year, but workers start setting off as much as two weeks earlier on packed trains and buses. After the holiday they may take the same amount of time to return, or not. The holiday is a prime occasion to switch jobs.

It all means an annual headache for retailers and importers overseas who rely on China.

Shipping companies warn customers that China's transport and logistics networks are at capacity and their shipments must be at ports two weeks ahead of the holiday to stand a chance of getting on a boat before the country shuts down. This year, shipping delays are com-

pounded by a slowdown at U.S. West Coast ports.

— GLOBAL SHOPPING

The festival is traditionally the most important time of the year for family reunions,

"lai see," or lucky money. Selfridges and luxury brand Burberry are each offering cards and envelopes personalized with Chinese calligraphy. Designer label Vivienne Westwood

each February, mostly on luxury jewelry, watches and designer clothes.

— ECONOMIC DISTORTION

Because the Lunar New Year never falls on the

two and half weeks later, so factories had more time to work on orders. The result is that this year's January trade data, for example, was artificially weak.

"We always warn about the CNY effect and the risk of reading too much into these figures at this time of year," said Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics. "This affects most of the data out of China in January and February as well headline export growth in countries such as Korea that are heavily dependent on the Chinese market."

— HOLIDAY SURPRISE

Just because it's a holiday doesn't mean there won't be any major surprises. Chinese officials are notorious for releasing big news during important holidays, unexpected announcements that "hit you with your pants down unprepared," said Francis Lun, CEO of GEO Securities.

The timing may be an attempt to reduce the impact on financial markets, or for the more skeptical, to bury bad news. In 2011, the central bank raised interest rates at the tail end of Chinese New Year.

— CHINESE ABROAD

The holiday is celebrated by Chinese communities around the world. In San Francisco, where about one in five residents is of Chinese descent, the celebration is stretched over a few weeks, with fairs, beauty queens, bazaars, lion dances and deafening firecrackers in Chinatown. □



A woman poses for a photograph amongst decorations to celebrate the upcoming Chinese Lunar New Year in Hong Kong. The Lunar New Year, which falls on Feb. 19, marks the Year of the Goat on the Chinese calendar.

(AP Photo/Kin Cheung)

but as China has become prosperous, an increasing number of wealthy Chinese are opting to travel abroad. That translates into big business for global luxury brands. Many British department st

ores, for example, are pulling out all the stops to woo mainland Chinese shoppers. (Designer handbags, watches and jewelry can be up to 30 percent cheaper in Europe because of high luxury taxes in China.) Harrods is selling its own brand of red envelopes traditionally used to give

has launched a collectors' necklace featuring a sheep pendant.

Shoppers at Fortnum & Mason paying with UnionPay cards — China's home-grown payment network — will get bonus gifts.

Chinese spending in Britain last February jumped 23 percent over the same month in 2012, said Gordon Clark, manager at Global Blue, a Switzerland-based firm that tracks luxury retail spending worldwide. Chinese shoppers spend an average 739 pounds (\$1,137) per transaction in Britain

same date, it plays havoc with Chinese economic data at the start of the year. Economists are cautious not to read too much into figures from January or February, and prefer to wait until March to see the trends lest they make an incorrect interpretation of the world's second-biggest economy.

Last year, the holiday started on the last day of January which meant activity was more compressed as factories rushed to get their orders out the door. This year, the holiday falls about

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Obama Outlines Programs To Counter Extremism

Continued from front

"Just as leaders like myself reject the notion that terrorists like ISIL genuinely represent Islam, Muslim leaders need to do more to discredit the notion that our nations are determined to suppress Islam," Obama said.

Issuing such a direct challenge to Muslims marked a clear departure from the restrained, cautious language Obama and his aides have used to describe the situation in the past.

In the days after last month's shootings at a satirical French newspaper that had caricatured the Prophet Muhammad, Obama avoided calling the attack an example of "Islamic extremism," and instead opted for the more generic "violent extremism." Recently, the White House also struggled to explain whether the U.S. believes the Afghan Taliban to be a terrorist organization. The refusal to directly assess any Islamic role in the terrifying scenes playing out in Europe, the Middle East and Africa has drawn criticism from those who say Obama has prioritized political correctness over a frank acknowledgment of reality. National security hawks, in particular, argued that Obama's counterterrorism strategy couldn't possibly be successful if the president was unable or unwilling to confront the true nature of the threat.

White House aides said



A lone protester carries a sign outside during the White House summit on countering violent extremism in Washington, Feb. 18, 2015. In a speech at the event, President Barack Obama will discuss how to prevent groups like the Islamic State from recruiting disaffected young people.

(Stephen Crowley/The New York Times)

they were avoiding associating the attacks with Islam for the sake of "accuracy" and to avoid lending credence to the terrorists' own justification for violence — a strict interpretation of Islam. Frustrated by what they deemed a manufactured controversy, Obama aides have argued that a focus on terminology has distracted from more fruitful conversations about what can actually be done to stop extremist ideologies from spreading.

"These are individuals who carried out an act of terrorism, and they later tried to justify that act of terrorism by invoking the religion of Islam and their own deviant view of it," White House spokesman Josh Earnest

said at the time.

Yet the argument over terminology has increasingly become a distraction, including this week as Obama gathered law enforcement officials, Muslim leaders and lawmakers for a three-day summit on violent extremism. In his remarks Wednesday, Obama acknowledged it was a touchy subject but insisted it was critical to tackle the issue "head-on." "We can't shy away from these discussions," he said. "And too often, folks are understandably sensitive about addressing some of these root issues, but we have to talk about them honestly and clearly."

Still, the president took care to differentiate militant

groups from the "billion Muslims who reject their ideology." He noted that

IS is killing far more Muslims than non-Muslims, and he called for the world community to elevate the voices of those who "saw the truth" after being radicalized temporarily.

Obama acknowledged that many Muslims in the U.S. have a suspicion of government and police, feeling they have been unfairly targeted, that has confounded efforts to strengthen cooperation between law enforcement and Muslim communities. He effusively praised Muslims who have served the U.S. in the military or in other capacities for generations.

"Of course, that's the story extremists and terrorists don't want the world to know: Muslims succeeding and thriving in America," Obama said. "Because when that truth is known, it exposes their propaganda as the lie that it is." □

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Joseph Clancy, acting Secret Service director and a former head of President Barack Obama's security detail, speaks during a House Judiciary Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington. On Feb. 18, 2015, Obama decided to appoint Clancy, who has guided the Secret Service on an interim basis for the past four months, to permanently lead the agency, law enforcement officials said. (Jabin Botsford/The New York Times)

Obama said to choose Joseph Clancy as leader of the Secret Service

MICHAEL S. SCHMIDT
© 2015 New York Times

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama has decided to appoint Joseph P. Clancy, who has guided the Secret Service on an interim basis for the last four months, to lead the agency permanently, law enforcement officials said Wednesday.

In appointing Clancy, a former head of Obama's security detail, the president rejected calls from critics on Capitol Hill and members of a special Department of Homeland Security panel who said that a string of mishaps and scandals made it clear that the agency should be run by an outsider.

Had Obama chosen the other leading candidate for the job - Sean Joyce, a former deputy director of the FBI - it would have been the first time in the agency's 150-year history that it had been run by someone who had not previously been one of its agents.

The Secret Service's most ardent critic on Capitol Hill, Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, the chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, released a statement criticizing the decision.

"The panel made it crystal clear that only a director from outside the agency would meet the needs of the agency today - someone with a fresh perspective, free from allegiances and without ties to what has consistently been described as a 'good old boys network,'" Chaffetz said.

"The good men and women of the Secret Service are screaming for a fresh start," Chaffetz said. "At this moment in time, the Secret Service would best be served by a transformative and dynamic leader from outside the agency."

Chaffetz said he appreciated "how available Acting Director Clancy has made himself over the past few months" and looked forward to working with

him.

Administration officials hope that Clancy's appointment can provide some stability at the agency, where five senior executives were demoted in the last month as part of an effort to shake up the leadership structure and appease critics.

The Secret Service also faces a busy period ahead: Along with protecting the first family and senior government officials, it will oversee the security for a visit by Pope Francis, for the 70th U.N. General Assembly and the beginning of the 2016 presidential campaign.

Clancy has significant challenges ahead of him, according to a report produced by the four members of the Department of Homeland Security panel appointed to study the Secret Service after a man jumped the White House fence in September and made it into the building.

The agency needs a strong leader, the report said, is "stretched to and, in many cases, beyond its limits," and needs to hire 85 agents and 200 uniformed officers to sufficiently perform its mission.

"Perhaps, the Service's great strength - the commitment to its personnel to sacrifice and do the job 'no matter what' - has had unintended consequences," the report said.

Money that should be spent on new technology systems often goes to pay overtime for agents and officers at the White House, who are overworked. "Rather than sending its agents and officers to training, it keeps them at their posts," the report said.

In 2013, the average officer received about 25 minutes of training, the report said. The fence around the White House, which the report said needed to be "changed as soon as possible" to be several feet taller, still has not been altered. □



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Jeb Bush: 'Mistakes' made in Iraq on his brother's watch



Former Florida Gov. Jeb. Bush answers questions after speaking to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015, in Chicago. The likely Republican candidate says his views about America's place in the world will often be compared to those of his father and brother, but plans to tell the audience Wednesday, "I am my own man." according to excerpts released ahead of the speech.

(AP Photo/M. Spencer Green)

THOMAS BEAUMONT
Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Republican presidential prospect Jeb Bush said Wednesday that "there were mistakes made in Iraq" during his brother's administration, offering the critique during a wide-ranging speech on foreign policy that comes as part of his run-up to a likely campaign for the White House. Speaking to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, the former Florida governor said during a question-and-answer session after his speech that intelligence about Saddam Hussein's possession of weapons of mass destruction was not accurate, and the U.S. initially failed to create an environment of security in the country after removing the Iraqi leader from power. But Bush praised former President George W. Bush's decision to "surge" troops

into Iraq in 2007, which added roughly 20,000 troops to the American forces in the country in an effort to improve security. He called it "one of the most heroic acts of courage politically" of any president. The surge was "hugely successful," Bush said, and it created "a fragile but more stable situation" in Iraq that President Barack Obama could have built on during his term in office. Bush offered harsh words for Obama's foreign policy during the speech, calling his administration "inconsistent and indecisive" and one that has led the U.S. to lose "the trust and the confidence of our friends." "The great irony of the Obama presidency is this: Someone who came to office promising greater engagement with the world has left America less influential in the world," Bush said.

George W. Bush finished his second term in 2009 amid the unpopular war in Iraq, an economy in freefall and with a majority of Americans disapproving of his job performance. Jeb Bush acknowledged during the speech that his views about America's place in the world will often be compared with those of his brother and father, former President George H.W. Bush, adding he is "lucky" to have had family members who have "shaped America's foreign policy from the Oval Office." "But I am my own man — and my views are shaped by my own thinking and own experiences," he said. "Each president learns from those who came before — their principles, their adjustments." Bush has recently been among the most aggressive in a crowded field of Republican politicians

contemplating a run for the White House. No one has emerged as an overwhelmingly front-runner for the Republican nomination, in contrast to the Democratic field, where Hillary Rodham Clinton is a clear early favorite, should she declare her intention to run. Among donors, Jeb Bush has noted a strong family and religious bond with his older brother, but has also said they are not clones and have differences common among siblings. Ahead of the speech, Bush aides also released what they called a preliminary group of experts who will provide him with foreign policy advice. They included familiar names, such as James Baker III and George Shultz, both

secretaries of State under President Ronald Reagan; former Homeland Security secretaries Tom Ridge and Michael Chertoff, and former Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, all three of whom served under George W. Bush. The list also included some lesser-known names, such as Meghan O'Sullivan, a former national security adviser to George W. Bush, who now teaches at Harvard and is seen as key to Jeb Bush's idea of lessening U.S. dependence on Middle East energy. Bush aides also confirmed late Tuesday that former Minnesota Rep. Vin Weber, a senior policy aide to 2012 Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney, was advising Bush. □

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Companies in US West Coast port dispute appeal to workers

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Maritime companies locked in a contract dispute with West Coast dockworkers took their case directly to rank-and-file longshoremen Wednesday, as negotiators struggled to reach a deal and break the cargo gridlock that has stalled billions of dollars of international trade.

In a move sure to upset union leaders, employers distributed letters at major ports from Los Angeles to Washington state that detailed their "last, best and final" contract offer.

Meanwhile, negotiators for the union and the Pacific Maritime Association, which represents employers, met with U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez in San Francisco.

The involvement of the top U.S. labor official underscored rising political and economic pressure to reach a contract deal and free cargo bottlenecks at 29 ports that handle about \$1 trillion of trade annually. As negotiators met be-



A truck moves a shipping container at the Port of Long Beach, in Long Beach, Calif. Maritime companies that are locked in a contract dispute with West Coast dockworkers took their case directly to rank-and-file longshoremen Wednesday, Feb. 18, as negotiators for both sides struggled to reach a deal and break cargo gridlock which has stalled billions of dollars of international trade. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

hind closed doors, with a media blackout in effect, dockworkers read the letter signed by the president of the association that represents companies that own, load and unload massive ships.

At a marine terminal in Tacoma, Washington, fore-

men handed out letters to dockworkers. In Los Angeles, letters were put in lunch rooms at many of the terminals.

The letter detailed a third, comprehensive contract offer employers made Feb. 12 — more recently than has been publicly dis-

closed.

Employers appear to hope that union members will conclude the offer — which the letter said includes wage and pension increases and the maintenance of low-cost health benefits — is strong, and dockworkers will then pressure their ne-

gotiators to accept it.

One labor expert questioned whether that would work, especially with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, which has a history of fighting employers and winning contracts that are the envy of other blue-collar industries. Under the prior contract, which expired in July, average wages exceed \$50 an hour, according to the maritime association.

To date, employers have done partial lockouts, principally of crews that load and unload containers at the docks using massive cranes. The union denies there is a coordinated slow-down and instead blames problems moving cargo from ships to dockside yards to distribution warehouses on factors including a shortage of trucks and drivers. Dozens of ships are anchored off the West Coast. Laden with clothing, toys, televisions, auto parts and a big-box-store selection of other goods, the vessels are waiting for dock space that is taking weeks to become free. □

US, Canada reach key funding deal for Detroit-Windsor bridge

DAVID N. GOODMAN
Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — The Obama administration and Canada have agreed on financing a key piece of a planned \$2.1 billion bridge connecting Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, the two governments announced Wednesday.

The agreement involves a funding mechanism for a toll plaza on the U.S. side of the international crossing, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said in a statement. It says a "public-private partnership" will pay for the plaza's con-

struction, with reimbursement from bridge tolls.

Both governments have said the new bridge will create thousands of jobs and further stimulate the \$658 billion annual trade between the nations.

"This agreement clears one of the final hurdles to building this hugely important bridge. Both Michigan and the entire nation will benefit," U.S. Rep. Sandy Levin said in a statement.

Authorities have said the limited capacity of the 85-year-old Ambassador Bridge and the 85-year-old Detroit-Windsor Tunnel,

which is too tight for tractor-trailers, is an increasing impediment to trade.

Michigan Sen. Debbie Stabenow called Wednesday's deal "a critical step forward" for the project, long stymied by opposition from owners of the nearby Ambassador Bridge who seek to add a new span of their own across the Detroit River. That opposition has blocked the needed U.S. funding for the plaza. The bridge itself already was to be built without U.S. funds. Canadian Transport Minister Lisa Raitt said the agreement ensures "that the new

publicly owned bridge between Windsor, Ontario, and Detroit, Michigan, can proceed without further delay" and that the project "will ultimately be delivered through a public-private partnership." U.S. lawmakers said it remains crucial for the Obama administration and Congress to appropriate the funds that will be needed to operate the U.S. Customs plaza. Officials have said they hope to open the bridge in 2020.

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, a supporter of the new bridge, said he "will con-

tinue to encourage the U.S. government to provide the necessary resources to fund U.S. customs facilities" at the bridge and at the Blue Water Bridge that links Port Huron, Michigan, and Sarnia, Ontario, about 55 miles (90 kilometers) north-northeast of Detroit.

Ambassador Bridge owner Matty Moroun had paid for a campaign to get a proposal on the November 2012 Michigan ballot seeking to block any new cross-border bridges or tunnels without holding a referendum first. Voters defeated the proposal. □



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US Financial Front:

For many in US, cash saved at gas pump is staying in pockets



Sonu Singh pumps gas for a motorist at a Delta gas station in downtown Newark, N.J., where the cash price for regular unleaded was listed at \$1.71. The lowest gas prices in five years had given people more spending money, and hiring was surging. And yet, to the surprise of analysts, consumers have held their wallets closely.

(AP Photo/Julio Cortez)

C. S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) —

In recent months, the stage seemed set for American consumers to do what they've traditionally done best: Spend money — and drive the economy. The lowest gas prices in five years had given people more spending money. Employers added over 1 million jobs from November through January, the best three-month pace in 17 years. Businesses even raised pay in December. Economists had forecast that last week's retail sales report for January would show a healthy rise. And yet — to the surprise of analysts — consumers have held their wallets closely. Even though Americans spent \$6.7 billion less at gas stations in January than

they had two months earlier, the extra cash didn't get spent anywhere else: Retail sales, excluding gas, fell slightly from November to January. The unexpected pullback provided evidence that drivers had used their extra money to further rebuild their savings and reduce their debts — a trend that began after the financial crisis and recession. In the long run, deeper savings and shrunken debts benefit individual households — and, eventually, even the economy as a whole, because they supply fuel for a sustained flow of future spending. For now, though, the slowdown in consumer spending likely means the economy will grow more slowly in the first quarter of the year than economists had previ-

ously envisioned. Their forecast now is for annualized growth of 2.5 percent from January through March, down from an earlier estimate of about 3 percent. In the meantime, many Americans are finding more money in their pockets. In January, the national average gas price fell to \$2.03 a gallon, according to AAA, the lowest since 2009. Though the average has since risen to \$2.24, it's still nearly \$1.10 cheaper than 12 months ago. As a result, the typical household will have \$750 more in hand this year, according to an estimate by the government's Energy Information Administration. So why aren't Americans spending more? One key reason: The deep damage to Americans' finances from the recession

has continued to leave households more frugal than many economists had expected. Americans have shrunk their debt loads but still aren't ready to spend as freely as they did before. "Even more than five years after the end of the Great Recession, the U.S. consumer is still exhibiting a degree of caution," Michael Feroli, an economist at JPMorgan Chase, said in a note to clients. Americans saved 4.9 percent of their income in December, up from 4.3 percent in November, according to government data. Feroli estimates that the savings rate rose again last month to 5.3 percent. That would be the highest rate in nearly a year and a half. Some economists note, too, that people accrue savings from lower gas prices only gradually and, if they do step up spending, tend to do so slowly at first. Many Americans also may not feel sure that the low

gas prices will last. Cheaper gas is saving Jon Woll and his wife about \$30 a week. Yet they aren't splurging. Instead, they're using the extra cash to pay off credit card debt. They do plan to spend more this summer on a longer vacation. Woll, 44, and his wife live just outside Minneapolis with their 8-year-old daughter. Though gas prices have fallen steadily since fall, they are only now feeling the benefit. Economists say it can take three to six months for consumers to spend "found money," such as a tax rebate or savings from cheaper gas. If that trend holds true, U.S. spending, and economic growth, could pick up in coming months. "I have no doubts that money will be spent over the next couple of quarters," said Andrew Labelle, an economist at TD Bank Group. □

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American Living:

Allow Guns on Campus, Advocates Say, to Deter Rape

ALAN SCHWARZ

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As gun rights advocates push to legalize firearms on college campuses, an argument is taking shape: Arming female students will help reduce sexual assaults.

Support for so-called campus-carry laws had been hard to muster despite efforts by proponents to argue that armed students and faculty members could prevent mass shootings like the one at Virginia Tech in 2007. The carrying of concealed firearms on college campuses is banned in 41 states by law or by university policy. Carrying guns openly is generally not permitted.

But this year, lawmakers in 10 states who are pushing bills that would permit the carrying of firearms on campus are hoping that the national spotlight on sexual assault will help them win passage of their measures.

"If you've got a person that's raped because you wouldn't let them carry a firearm to defend themselves, I think you're responsible," state Rep. Dennis K. Baxley, R-Fla., said during debate in a House subcommittee last month. The bill passed.

The sponsor of a bill in Nevada, Assemblywoman Michele Fiore, said in a telephone interview, "If these young, hot little girls on campus have a firearm, I wonder how many men will want to assault them. The sexual assaults that are occurring would go down once these sexual predators get a bullet in their head."

In addition to those in Florida and Nevada, bills that would allow guns on cam-

pus have been introduced in Indiana, Montana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee,

and national president of One in Four, which provides educational programs on sexual assault to

Keep Guns Off Campus. "It resonates with lawmakers." Colorado, Wisconsin and seven other states allow

whether Collins will testify anywhere this year.

Some surveys have estimated that a vast majority of college presidents and faculty members oppose allowing firearms on campus. Support was somewhat higher among students, but 67 percent of men and 86 percent of women still disliked the concept.

Many students who support current legislation have joined the lobbying group Students for Concealed Carry. Crayle Vanest, an Indiana University senior who recently became the first woman on the group's national board, said she should be able to carry her licensed .38-caliber Bersa Thunder pistol on campus, where she said she had walked unarmed after her late-night shifts at a library food court.

"Universities are under a ton of investigation for how they handle sexual assaults - that shows how safe campus maybe isn't," said Vanest, who is lobbying Indiana lawmakers. "Our female membership has increased massively.

People who weren't listening before are listening now."

Some lawmakers said they expected that votes on the bills would largely be along party lines.

Fiore of Nevada, for example, predicted the Republican-controlled Legislature and Republican governor would enact her bill. She added that people who understood the extent of sexual assaults on college campuses, perhaps female Democrats who had been sexually assaulted themselves, "need to call their legislators and say, 'Represent us today or lose your election tomorrow.'"



Crayle Vanest, an Indiana University senior who recently became the first woman on the national board of Students for Campus Carry, a lobbying group, on campus in Bloomington, Ind. This year, lawmakers in 10 states who are pushing bills that would permit the carrying of firearms on campus are hoping that the national spotlight on sexual assault will help them win passage of their measures, which have been hard to muster support for in the past.

(Aaron P. Bernstein/The New York Times)

Texas and Wyoming.

Opponents contend that university campuses should remain havens from the gun-related risks that exist elsewhere, and that college students, with high rates of binge drinking and other recklessness, would be particularly prone to gun accidents.


Some experts in sexual assault said that college women were typically assaulted by someone they knew, sometimes a friend, so even if they had access to their gun, they would rarely be tempted to use it. "It reflects a misunderstanding of sexual assaults in general," said John D. Foubert, an Oklahoma State University professor

college campuses. "If you have a rape situation, usually it starts with some sort of consensual behavior, and by the time it switches to nonconsensual, it would be nearly impossible to run for a gun. Maybe if it's someone who raped you before and is coming back, it theoretically could help them feel more secure."

Other objectors to the bills say that advocates of the campus-carry laws, predominantly Republicans with well-established pro-gun stances, are merely exploiting a hot-button issue. "The gun lobby has seized on this tactic, this subject of sexual assault," said Andy Pelosi, the executive director of the Campaign to

people with legal carry permits to take concealed firearms to campus, some with restrictions. (For example, Michigan does not allow guns in dormitories or classrooms.) Many of those states once had bans but lifted them in recent legislative cycles, suggesting some momentum for efforts in 2015.

Past debates in Colorado, Michigan and Nevada have included testimony in support of campus-carry laws from Amanda Collins, who in 2007 was raped on the campus of the University of Nevada in Reno; Collins has said that had she been carrying her licensed gun, she would have averted the attack. It is unclear



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Embattled Debaltseve falls to Ukraine rebels; troops retreat

BALINT SZLANKO

JIM HEINTZ

Associated Press

ARTEMIVSK, Ukraine (AP) —

Government soldiers pulled out of a ferociously contested railway hub in eastern Ukraine Wednesday, ending a siege so intense the retreating troops said they couldn't get water or food amid relentless shelling by Russian-backed separatists. At least six soldiers were killed in the withdrawal and more than 100 wounded. President Petro Poroshenko sought to portray the fall of Debaltseve in a positive light, saying the pullback was carried out "in a planned and organized manner," despite assertions by exhausted and dirt-caked soldiers, some of whom made their way out on foot, that their forces suffered heavy losses.

No matter the circumstances, the retreat appeared to be an acceptance by the Ukrainian leader of a humiliating defeat in exchange for a chance at pushing a shaky truce agreement forward and securing the pullback of heavy weapons. The loss of Debaltseve was a serious setback for the army. The town is a strategic railroad junction that lies on the most direct route between the separatist east's two major cities, Donetsk and Luhansk. By taking control of it, rebels gain significant transportation connections to boost their regions' capacity to



An Ukrainian serviceman stands next to a broken down military vehicle outside Artemivsk, Ukraine, while pulling out of Debaltseve, Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015. After weeks of relentless fighting, the embattled Ukrainian rail hub of Debaltseve fell Wednesday to Russia-backed separatists, who hoisted a flag in triumph over the town. The Ukrainian president confirmed that he had ordered troops to pull out and the rebels reported taking hundreds of soldiers captive.

(AP Photo/Vadim Ghirda)

function as a unified entity. Its strategic importance kept the battle raging even after a cease-fire between Ukrainian forces and the Russia-backed rebels went into effect Sunday and appeared to be mostly holding elsewhere after fighting that has killed more than 5,600 people since April. Relinquishing the town could remove the major impediment to a lasting cease-fire and begin the next step that was agreed to in a peace deal last week — the pullback of heavy weapons by both sides to create a buffer

zone at least 50 kilometers (30 miles) wide. But the images of traumatized soldiers and their stories of deprivation will be another wound to a national psyche already bruised by Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula last March and the vicious fighting in the east, where Ukrainian forces suffered heavy losses at the hands of rebels they and the West claim got a huge boost from Russian equipment and troops. Semyon Semchenko, a battalion commander and a member of parlia-

ment, accused the military command of betraying the country's interests in Debaltseve.

"We had enough forces and means," he said in a Facebook post. "The problem is the command and coordination. They are as bad as can be."

Semenchenko's words cut especially hard because he became well-known during another major rebel rout of Ukrainian forces in the battle for Ilovaysk last summer. Semenchenko, who was wounded in the fighting, was critical of the government for allegedly

abandoning volunteer troops there.

A top separatist official, Denis Pushilin, meanwhile, contended that the government pullback Wednesday wasn't a retreat at all, but that rebels had overpowered most of the soldiers, killing them or forcing them to surrender.

Poroshenko told a late night meeting of his national security council that six soldiers were killed during the withdrawal and more than 100 were injured, the Interfax news agency said. He called on the body to consider asking for a U.N. peacekeeping mission, a move he previously opposed, apparently fearing they would include troops from Russia or its client states. The new proposal suggests a mission be made up of security forces from European Union countries. Russia, as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, has the power to veto any peacekeeping mission.

Associated Press journalists were blocked from access to Debaltseve making it impossible to independently assess circumstances there. Russian television ran footage of rebels raising the flag of Novorossiya, as they call their nominal republic, over a building in the town, and images of several dozen captured Ukrainian troops being escorted along a village road by the rebels. □

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Islamic State militants find a foothold in chaotic Libya

MAGGIE MICHAEL

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Libya, virtually a failed state in recent years, has succeeded in one way: It's providing a perfect opportunity for the Islamic State group to expand from Syria and Iraq to establish a strategic foothold closer to European shores.

Extremists loyal to the group have taken control of two Libyan cities on the Mediterranean coast, have moved toward oil facilities and are slowly infiltrating the capital,

Tripoli, and the second-largest city, Benghazi. They have siphoned off young recruits from rival militant groups linked to al-Qaida and in some places taken over those groups' training camps, mosques and media networks.

Notably, there appears to be strong coordination between the Libya branch and the group's central leadership in Syria and Iraq. One of its top clerics, Bahraini Turki al-Binali, has visited the Libyan city of Sirte to preach: in 2013 and again

at the end of last year, soon before it fell into the hands of the group's supporters, according to a rival militia

A video released last week showing the beheading of a group of Egyptian Christians abducted from Sirte

Sirte, according to Libyan Interior Minister Omar al-Sinki.

The militia official said Is-

ter, built by former dictator Moammar Gadhafi as a symbol of his secular regime's aspirations to be a pan-African leader.

An Associated Press reporter who briefly visited Sirte on Wednesday saw masked militants deployed along the main road linking the convention center to downtown.

The close connection between the Libya branch and the central leadership around Islamic State chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi underscores the strategic importance of the North African country to the group. Libya boasts oil resources - something the extremists have exploited for funding in Iraq and Syria.

There are vast amounts of weapons, a legacy of the turmoil since Gadhafi's 2011 ouster. Its borders with Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria are porous.

And the southern shore of Italy is about 400 miles (660 kilometers) away, a distance Libyans fleeing their country's chaos regularly try to cross in rickety boats.



Libyan followers of Ansar al-Shariah Brigades and other Islamic militias, hold a demonstration against a film and a cartoon denigrating the Prophet Muhammad in Benghazi. Libya, virtually a failed state the past years, has provided a perfect opportunity for the Islamic State group to expand from its heartland of Syria and Iraq to establish a strategic stronghold close to European shores.

(AP Photo)

official based there. The official spoke on condition of anonymity for fear for his life.

was produced by the IS media branch.

About 400 mostly Yemeni and Tunisian fighters are in

Islamic State fighters have set up headquarters in the city's convention complex, the Ouagadougou Cen-

Fierce fighting near Aleppo as UN envoy pushes truce in city

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian rebels fought deadly battles with government forces north of the divided city of Aleppo on Wednesday as both sides sought to expand their ground amid a push by the U.N. envoy to the country to broker a cease-fire in the war-ravaged city. The clashes began with a government offensive launched few hours before the envoy, Staffan de Mistura, said that Presi-

dent Bashar Assad has expressed willingness to suspend bombing of Aleppo for six weeks.

The hiatus would set the stage for a proposed U.N. plan to "freeze" hostilities in what is Syria's largest city. However, rebels and opposition activists said that they are deeply skeptical — based on past experience and similar peace efforts that have crumbled — that the government would abide by any truce.

"The regime says it wants dialogue then attacks rebel positions," said Bahaa Halaby, an activist in Aleppo. He said fierce clashes were taking place north of the city Wednesday.

Syrian government forces backed by Shiite fighters, including the Lebanese Hezbollah group, launched a surprise offensive on Tuesday, capturing several villages that brought them closer to their goal of cutting off the main supply

route to rebels in Aleppo and besieging opposition-held areas of the city.

More than a hundred people on both sides of the fighting were killed by Wednesday, in a counter-offensive in which rebels regained much of the territory they lost a day earlier, activists said.

An amateur video released by rebels showed the bodies of at least 25 Syrian soldiers and pro-government gunmen in Aleppo's north-

ern suburb of Mallah, scattered in a muddy open field. The video appeared genuine and corresponded to other Associated Press reporting of the violent clashes taking place. Pro-government TV channels, in turn, ran footage showing troops running behind tanks in smoke-filled fields and fighters driving vehicles mounted with heavy machine guns to the backdrop of nonstop gunfire and explosions. □

Resignation in Venezuela on anniversary of leader's arrest



Supporters of jailed opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez chant slogans demanding his freedom and at an event marking the one year anniversary of his arrest and imprisonment in Caracas, Venezuela, Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015. (AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

HANNAH DREIER
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — One year has passed since Venezuela's streets were rocked by anti-

government protests that left 43 people dead and neighborhoods choked by flaming barricades. The unrest culminated with the arrest of Leopoldo Lo-

pez, a former Caracas-area mayor and key opposition leader, who waved goodbye to thousands of supporters before being hauled away for what he

and his family expected to be a short time in custody. On Wednesday, supporters marked the anniversary of Lopez's detention by gathering to demand his release. But the street-paralyzing marches and raucous protests of last year were nowhere in sight.

Even though Venezuela's oil-based economy is in tatters and polls show support for socialist President Nicolas Maduro at an all-time low, demonstrations against the government have been small and sporadic.

The opposition's momentum dissipated after last year's demonstrations failed to produce anything other than division, with ranks split over whether to push for change through the street protests like those favored by Lopez or by trying to win elections later this year.

Lopez's wife gathered with a small group of supporters to mark the date of her hus-

band's arrest, and asked Venezuelans to show their support for him by wearing white. But for most of the day, people in the plaza that was the epicenter of the protests in 2014 went about their daily routines.

Homemaker Laura Narvais paused to look at photos honoring the students who died in last year's violence as she passed through on her way to a market to search for milk.

"I hate to say it, but their sacrifice was in vain because the government continues just as it did before," Narvais said.

Some Venezuelans have said they are too busy to demonstrate, their time spent trying to find basic goods at the markets that receive only a trickle of specific scarce items due to the country's cash-crunch and price controls. Many also are afraid of landing in jail like the thousands hauled away during last year's crackdown. □

Argentina protest demanding answers about dead prosecutor

DEBORA REY
PETER PRENGAMAN
Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — Thousands of Argentines marched in the capital Wednesday demanding answers in the mysterious death of prosecutor Alberto Nisman exactly one month after he was found in his bathroom with a bullet in his right temple. Protesters waved Argentine flags and carried white signs with black letters that read "Justice!" and "Truth!" Many also carried umbrellas to repel a burst of summer rain. Blanca Perez, 81, said she believed Nisman had been murdered and the government needed to account. "If we don't have justice, we won't have liberty," she said. "The government has lost control of the situation."

Organized by several prosecutors, protesters planned to walk from Congress to the iconic Plaza de Mayo in downtown Buenos Aires. While police declined to provide estimates, the

10-block stretch, plus many surrounding streets, burst with people, suggesting it was one of the biggest of several marches since Nisman's body was discovered Jan. 18.

The 51-year-old prosecutor was found in a pool of blood the day before he was to detail to Congress his explosive accusations that President Cristina Fernandez and top administration officials orchestrated a secret deal with Iran to shield Iranian officials allegedly responsible for the 1994 bombing that killed 85 people at a Jewish community center in Argentina's capital.

Fernandez has denied the allegations, but her administration has struggled to confront a growing political crisis.

The president initially suggested Nisman had killed himself, then did an about-face a few days later, saying she suspected he had been slain. Authorities now say they are investigating the possibility of suicide or homicide.



People gather to demand answers from the government in the mysterious death of prosecutor Alberto Nisman one month ago in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015. (AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)

Like many Argentines, lawyer Marcelo Lopez rejected the idea that Nisman killed himself.

"I'm worried about the future of my country," he said, holding a sign that read, "They can't 'suicide' us all."

In the lead up to the march, the main opposition parties said they planned to par-

ticipate, making it a hotly contested political issue and adding to intensifying rhetoric from the government.

Fernandez has suggested Nisman was killed by rogue counterintelligence agents and have cast suspicions on Antonio "Jaime" Stiuso, who reportedly oversaw a vast wire-tapping opera-

tion before being removed by Fernandez in December.

Stiuso, who had worked with Nisman on his investigation, provided testimony on Wednesday, according to a statement from the office of Viviana Fein, the lead investigator in Nisman's death. No other details were provided. □

Despite ban, fox hunts still thrive, and divide, in Britain

JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

IBSTONE, England (AP) —

The horses wait in the farmyard, tails braided and manes gleaming, while huntsmen in brightly colored coats marshal the eager hounds, straining to chase the scent of a fox. To some, the start of a fox hunt is a quintessentially English scene, steeped in tradition. To others, it's a barbaric rite preserved for the rich. Oscar Wilde dubbed fox hunting "the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable," and a decade ago Wednesday lawmakers banned the centuries-old blood sport, which has many opponents in Britain's cities, and deep roots in its countryside.

"People who live in the country support hunting," said Mike Murray, who has come to see off the hounds and riders of the Kimblewick Hunt in Ibstone, a village tucked into the wooded Chiltern Hills an hour outside of London. "It's as simple as that."

When hunting with hounds was banned, pro-hunting groups feared the sport could disappear, endangering thousands of rural jobs, from dog breeders to stable hands to blacksmiths.

But hunting has survived, and even prospered, by adapting to the new rules — or, opponents claim, by flouting the law. Thousands of people still attend organized hunts each week throughout the winter, and only a handful of hunters have been convicted of breaching the ban.

Some opponents of hunting say that's evidence that there is one law for the rich and one for the poor. Hunt supporters say it's the result of a bad law motivated by social hostility. Sooner or later, all debates about fox hunting come to the c-word: class.

Tim Bonner of rural lobby group the Countryside Alliance said the ban was motivated by "a class-war agenda."

"It has nothing to do with animal welfare," he said. "It was about politics. This is

the chosen battleground of those who want to dismantle the rural way of life."

Many rural people reacted

unemployment, condemn hunting dogs to death and lead to a plague of foxes. Those dire predictions have

Cruel Sports claims kills are a regular occurrence and accuses hunters of using "underhanded methods"

that fox hunters account for a very small proportion of prosecutions under the act. They say the low num-



Gerald Sumner huntsman and master of the hounds of Kimblewick Hunt, leads off the hunt in Ibstone, England. A decade ago, Britain banned fox hunting with hounds, a centuries-old blood sport with deep roots in the countryside and strong opponents in the towns.

(AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

with fury when then-Prime Minister Tony Blair — whose Labour Party is strongest in urban areas — announced plans to outlaw hunting. Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators marched through London, some clashing with riot police outside Parliament. Protesters even stormed onto the floor of the House of Commons. Blair later said the hunting ban was one of the few acts he regretted. He said he had failed to understand that for many rural people, "this was a fundamental part of their way of life."

British fox hunting — a form of pest control that became a sport — traditionally involves groups of riders following a pack of hounds trained to track and kill foxes. The Hunting Act, which came into force on Feb. 18, 2005, bans using dogs to kill the animals, though there are loopholes: up to two hounds can chase foxes into open ground so they can be shot.

Hunting supporters feared a ban would increase rural

not come true. The hunting ban has had relatively little impact on fox numbers, since the animals can still be trapped, shot or gassed by farmers.

And the sport has adapted. Like many other hunting clubs, the Kimblewick Hunt now practices trail hunting: Hounds and riders follow a scent trail of fox urine laid out in advance. Trail hunting keeps the dog packs active and allows riders the experience of hunting without the climactic act of a fox being ripped apart by dogs — or at least that's the theory. In practice, the dogs sometimes encounter foxes, and kill them.

"Our intention is to go out and trail hunt and work within the act as best we can, but obviously that becomes very difficult," said hunt master Gerald Sumner. "We're riding around the countryside, there's foxes about, a fox jumps up and suddenly we're criminals."

The number of foxes still being killed by hounds is unknown. The League Against

— such as claiming that intentional kills were accidental — to circumvent the law. Bonner, of the pro-hunting Countryside Alliance, agrees that foxes are still being killed by hounds, though he denies it's deliberate.

"Given the fine lines between what is and isn't an offense, people aren't too ready to advertise when they do have an unintentional pursuit," he said. "But it does happen."

Clamping down on illegal hunting is not a police priority.

Official figures show that 341 people were prosecuted under the Hunting Act between 2005 and the end of 2013 — but the vast majority of them had nothing to do with fox hunting. Most of the cases involved poaching or illegally hunting hares.

The Countryside Alliance says that only 12 hunt members have been convicted, out of about 45,000 people who hunt regularly with almost 200 registered groups. Anti-hunting groups agree

ber of convictions means the law is not being enforced strongly enough.

"The government, when they passed the act, didn't say who they wanted to enforce it," said David Bowles of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

"There were illegal activities in the countryside and nobody was taking any enforcement actions."

The RSPCA and charities stepped in to fill the gap by mounting prosecutions for illegal hunting. For evidence, they rely on volunteers — hunting supporters call them vigilantes — who film hunts in a bid to record dogs killing foxes. Bands of saboteurs also sometimes try to disrupt hunts by making a racket, laying false trails and other direct-action tactics.

The rival factions sometimes exchange insults, and even blows. In January, the master of the Tedworth Hunt in western England was hospitalized after being attacked by masked protesters with iron bars. □



In Aruba:

All Five Divi Resorts Earn Silver Earthcheck Certification

-Divi & Tamarijn Aruba All Inclusives Earn Silver Certification for Third Year in a Row, Reflecting the Properties' Commitment to Sustainability.

ORANJESTAD - For the first time, all five Divi Resorts properties in Aruba have achieved Silver certification for 2014 from Earthcheck, the world's largest certifier of sustainable travel and tourism operators. "We are very pleased to have all five Divi Resorts properties in Aruba achieve this certification

from Earthcheck, which is a testament to our company's commitment to environmental responsibility," said Alex Nieuwmeyer, Managing Director, Divi Resorts Aruba.

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In order to become Sil-

ver certified, the properties were required to meet measurable standards for key environmental indicators such as energy and water consumption, total waste production, community commitment, and others.

Having met these standards is the result of hard work and dedication of the properties' staff and management team, with Daniel Aguirre of Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort attaining the EarthCheck Coordinator Certificate having successfully completed the

online training.

About EarthCheck:EC3 Global is the world's largest certifier of sustainable travel and tourism operators. The company's EarthCheck Program provides benchmarking, certification and performance improvement systems and has helped realize more than \$500 million in savings for its partners in over 70 countries. It is estimated that 6 million consumers a week are already touched with its branded solutions. For more information, visit www.earthcheck.org. □

Salvatore and Caterina Honored at the Renaissance Suites



ORANJESTAD - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple, whom are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, at the Renaissance Ocean Suites, as Ambassadors of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary title is presented



in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Salvatore and Mrs. Caterina Giannone from Kleinburg, Ontario, Canada. Salva-

tore and Caterina are loyal members of the Renaissance Ocean Suites, and they love the Island very much because of the friendly people, the climate, beaches, restaurants and the diversity of the island. Aruba feels like

a second home and the people are like a family to them. The certificate was presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mr. Tino Daal representing the Renaissance Ocean Suites. □

ATA Honors a Group of Loyal Visitors at Camacuri Residences



CAMICURI - Recently, the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring two loyal and friendly couples as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba at the Camacuri Residences. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba

for 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees include Jan and Lydie van der Roest and Wil and Jan Haasnoot, all residents of Holland! The certificates were presented by Ms. Darline S. de Cuba representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with General Manager Hans Timpner.

The reason they gave for returning to Aruba year-after-glorious-year are the warm inviting sun, the beautiful beaches, the gracious treatment from everyone, and the unending selection of restaurants. Congratulation families van der Roest and Haasnoot: you hold a special place in the hearts of Arubians! □

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Alhydran through the eyes of a professional

Rina Rijkenberg is a certified skin therapist in Oosterbeek, the Netherlands. As a specialist, she has different skin products to choose from, but *Alhydran* is her #1 solution. Rina: "A lot of complaints are that the skin feels dry, itchy, red, sensitive, and painful, which are symptoms frequently associated with burn victims, lymph edema patients, and people who have undergone radiation therapy or have general scar tissue, acne, or excessive hair. All this can be caused by a deregulation in the moisture levels of the skin. The secret to *Alhydran* is that it regulates the moisture levels of the skin continuously in an unprecedented way. A very high dosage of pure Aloe Vera gel delivers the hydration, and pure Vitamin C, Vitamin E, and Jojoba oil prolong the activity. Patients can actually see and feel their skin healing."

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(Palm beach)
- **Aruba Aloe Cruise Terminal**
(APA Cruise Terminal)

- **Aruba Aloe Divi Links**
(Divi Aruba Hotel)
- **Aruba Aloe Tamarijn**
(Tamarijn Aruba Hotel)
- **Aruba Aloe Occidental**
(Occidental Hotel)
- **Aruba Aloe Marriott Ocean Club**
- **Aruba Aloe Riu Palace Antillas**
- **Aruba Aloe Main Street**
- **Aruba Aloe at The Village**
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Bas and Rosmeurys Celebrate Their 10th Wedding Anniversary



ORANJESTAD - Life's twists and turns can be truly wonderful and amazing. The story of Bas Kuurstra from Holland and Rosmeurys Jimenez Gonzalez from the Dominican Republic, celebrating their tenth wedding anniversary yesterday, illustrates that.

This is a great love story that will put a smile on your face.

The two met eleven years ago, just after Bas had arrived on Aruba. Bas worked at Scandals Restaurant (now Cuba's Cookin') and Rosmeurys worked at next-door neighbor Sbarro's (now Starbucks), both in the Renaissance Marketplace.

Rosmeurys often came in for French fries with melted cheese or change, so the two became friends. Bas never realized that this gorgeous girl had her eye on him, but when a friend pointed this important fact out, he asked her out for a

date.

As Bas was so nervous, his stomach played up and the hot date at Que Pasa Restaurant ended with Rosmeurys nursing Bas through the night: not romantic at all!

So, as soon as Bas had recovered from his stomach virus, he asked Rosmeurys out again and sparks flew, there were countless magic moments and love was not just in the air. After a month there was a moment of temporary insanity when Bas wanted to return to Holland and said goodbye to the love of his life, but that only lasted one day. They could not live without each other, they realized and at Halloween 2014, Rosmeurys scantily dressed as Jane, Bas asked her to marry him. They still have not dared to show her parents how skimpy her outfit was that night.

The wedding of Bas and Rosmeurys was on February

2005; they did not have any money, so the rings were almost invisible and the guests all helped make it a fabulous day: Bas made his own three-tiered wedding cake and his brother took the pictures. The newlyweds sneaked out half-way the festivities to drink a few beers together and to play pool at Tumazu, which was quite a surprising move to everyone involved.

Now, ten years later, love is still going strong for Bas and Rosmeurys and their super kids Gael (5) and Kellan (3). Their wedding day and the days that their two wonderful sons were born are the highlights of their lives. Bas recently started his own 'Rent a Chef company' - it is doing fabulously well.

Life is smiling on this family. We hope the sun will be shining on them for a long, long time to come. Congratulations and many more anniversaries for you two! ☐



Popular Clarke picked as European captain for 2016 Ryder Cup

STEVE DOUGLAS
AP Sports Writer

Darren Clarke provided arguably the most emotional story line in the history of the Ryder Cup, and helped forge one of the competition's most successful partnerships.

And to mark the start of the next chapter in the charismatic, cigar-chomping Northern Irishman's Ryder Cup story, he was picked as captain of the European team for the 2016 event at Hazeltine.

Overwhelming player support and healthy respect for him on both sides of the Atlantic made Clarke a unanimous choice on Wednesday.

The five-man selection panel included Europe's last three captains — Colin Montgomerie, Jose Maria Olazabal and Paul McGinley. All three guided the team to victory, in very different ways, to give Clarke a hard act to follow.

"I have big shoes to fill," said Clarke, the British Open champion in 2011 and one of the most popular figures in golf.

Clarke played for Europe in five straight Ryder Cups from 1997-2006, winning four times. The last of these came at The K Club, where he helped the team to a record-equating 18½-9½ victory over the United States just six weeks after his first wife, Heather, died following a long battle with breast cancer. Playing through grief, he won all three of his matches.

Clarke was a non-playing vice captain under Montgomerie in 2010 and Olazabal in '12, which groomed him for the top job.

Continued on Next Page

GLOBE TROTTER

Colts take lead "world" of American football

In this Dec. 14, 2014, file photo, Indianapolis Colts general manager Ryan Grigson gestures before an NFL football game between the Indianapolis Colts and the Houston Texans in Indianapolis.

Associated Press
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2016 Ryder Cup

Continued from Page 17

"The Ryder Cup has been a massive part of my life and my career, so to have the chance to lead Europe next year is a huge honor," said the silver-haired Clarke, the first Northern Irishman to be given the captaincy.

Miguel Angel Jimenez of Spain and Thomas Bjorn of Denmark were also candidates for the role but Clarke was always the big favorite and ended up being the unanimous choice, Montgomerie said.

"I think he'll be a very good communicator, which is most important as a captain," Montgomerie said. "He has the respect of the players — that's a given as Open champion — and his record in the Ryder Cup is very good."

Clarke has won 11 1/2 points for Europe, with six points from eight matches



In this file photo dated Sunday Sept. 24, 2006, European Ryder Cup team player Darren Clarke holds the Ryder Cup trophy after Europe beat the United States to win the 2006 Ryder Cup at the K Club golf course, in Straffan, Ireland.

Associated Press

alongside Lee Westwood putting them joint-second in the all-time list of most successful Ryder Cup com-

binations.

Top-ranked Rory McIlroy and recent stalwarts of the European team like

Ian Poulter, Justin Rose and Graeme McDowell had given their backing to Clarke.

"That, to a large extent, crystallized my view on where the captaincy should go," McGinley said. "It's quite clear Darren got a lot of support."

Clarke said he would be "foolish" not to follow the same formula as McGinley, who created a great camaraderie in the European team as it swept to a 16½-11½ victory at Gleneagles in September.

While the Americans created a task force in the wake of a sixth loss in the last seven editions of the Ryder Cup, all Europe had to do was put someone in place to take forward the template of success. Clarke is unlikely to be revolutionary in his approach to Hazeltine.

"With the team bonding and team spirit in Gleneagles, it's something I'll want to replicate," Clarke said.

Clarke is popular in the United States and seems suited to be Europe's captain for a Ryder Cup on American soil. □

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Colts take lead in brave, new world of American football

MICHAEL MAROT

AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Ryan Grigson will go anywhere and do practically anything to find football players.

His global view has taken Indianapolis Colts' scouts to different pro leagues, college campuses of all sizes, regional combines, American basketball courts and even African rugby fields. Three seasons into his first gig as a general manager, Grigson believes this will be blueprint of the NFL's brave new world.

"I think the guys that sit on their hands, they've got to live with themselves and look in the mirror and realize they didn't take any chances," he said. "They've got to look at themselves and say, 'Did I even deserve this opportunity?' If you just sit on your

hands and say, 'I'm going to play it safe all the time,' you might be middle of the pack. But if you don't take a swing, you're never going to hit it out of the park." Grigson will never be considered risk averse.

During his brief tenure in Indy, Grigson has presided over four major moves — the release of Peyton Manning, the decision to draft Andrew Luck instead of Robert Griffin III, one high-profile trade for cornerback Vontae Davis in 2012, which worked out, and one blockbuster move for Trent Richardson, which did not. So when the NFL's annual scouting combine kicks into high gear Wednesday, Grigson will continue looking for players who will fit into one of the league's most unique locker rooms. Indy's current roster includes four players from the

CFL, two of whom attended Canadian colleges; a long snapper who developed his skills in the United Football League and af2, a lower level arena league; an Arena Football League veteran; a quarterback who spent part of his childhood in Europe; linebackers from Germany and Africa; and a kicker who started his career in Amsterdam.

The Colts have at least two players from every American college football division, FBS, FCS, Division II, Division III and NAIA, an American soldier and two converted college basketball players, one of whom never played organized football until last spring.

Tommy Wiking, president of the International Federation of American Football, believes increasing international interest in American



In this Nov. 30, 2014, file photo, Indianapolis Colts owner Jim Irsay, left, and general manager Ryan Grigson talk before an NFL football game against the Washington Redskins in Indianapolis.

Associated Press

WR Larry Fitzgerald stays with Arizona under 2-year deal

By BOB BAUM

AP Sports Writer

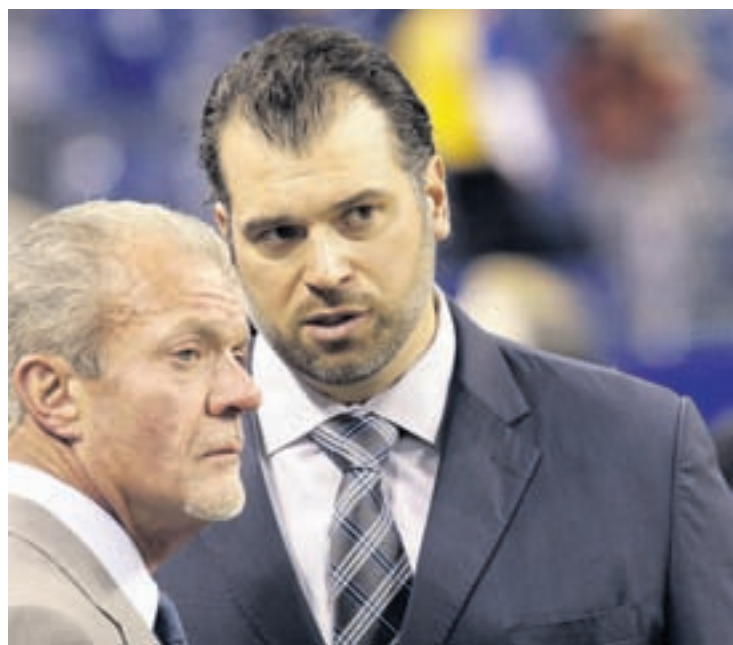
PHOENIX (AP) — Larry Fitzgerald is staying with the Arizona Cardinals, the only home he's known in his 11-year NFL career.

The eight-time Pro Bowl wide receiver has agreed to a restructured, two-year contract, Cardinals general manager Steve Keim announced at the NFL combine in Indianapolis on Wednesday.

The deal guarantees Fitzgerald \$11 million in each of the two years, a person with knowledge of the details said, and will save the Cardinals nearly \$13 million off their salary cap figure.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the salary figures had not officially been made public.

Fitzgerald, the widely popular longtime face of the franchise, had four years remaining on his previous contract, which would have paid him \$16.5 million next season with a whopping \$23.6 million cap hit.



In this Oct. 26, 2014, file photo, Arizona Cardinals wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald (11) scores a touchdown against the Philadelphia Eagles during the second half of an NFL football game in Glendale, Ariz.

Associated Press

"There were two things we wanted out of this deal," Keim said. "No. 1, we wanted to compensate Larry for the type of players he is and, No. 2, we wanted to set up a deal that would give us enough cap room to improve the team."

Keim and Cardinals President Michael Bidwill had said that resolving the con-

tract issue with Fitzgerald was the team's top off-season priority. They had long maintained they wanted Fitzgerald to end his career with the Cardinals.

"Once we decided to put our foot on the gas pedal we got it done pretty quickly," Keim said.

If an agreement had not been reached. □

football could create more locker room melting pots. He points to the 2013 draft, when linebacker Bjoern Werner of Germany and defensive linemen Ezekiel "Ziggy" Ansah of Ghana, Margus Hunt of Estonia and Star Lotulelei of Tonga were all selected among the top 53 picks.

This year's international contingent includes Nigerian-born Tayo Fabuluje and Bahamian native Jean Sifrin.

With more and more international athletes trying American football, Wiking sees no end to this new wave.

"It could be soccer, it could be handball, it could be someone in the gym that hasn't found a sport," Wiking said. "You also find people who have not been into sports for various reasons, who are attracted to our sport."

Former Dallas Cowboys executive Gil Brandt, who now works for NFL.com, was one of the key innovators in the 1960s and 1970s. He found players in all sorts of places — Europe, Australia, on national caravans and landed players from other sports. The Cowboys routinely brought 120 players to training camp, started workouts as early as July 2 and when they couldn't keep everyone, traded them.

The Grigson doctrine, Brandt believes, is a logical extension of what he did all those years ago.

"I think Ryan is a lot like

me," Brandt said. "I didn't have to go on scouting trips because I had scouts I trusted. I enjoyed it. I think he probably understands now how his guys grade football players. He may tell them what to look for." Though Colts owner Jim Irsay won't say how much money he pours into scouting, he acknowledges player costs top \$1 billion every six or seven years and that's despite saving some cash because the combine is in his own backyard. Unlike some penny-pinching owners, Irsay insists his investment has been worth every penny.

"You understand why you want the ability to drill down and find talent," said Irsay, a former GM of the Colts.

"I make sure I don't have wasted costs, but I also want to make sure we have the resources for greatness."

With Irsay's support, Grigson has been able to guide Indianapolis to the playoffs three straight years and turned his unconventional philosophy into a blueprint for success.

"Coach Andy Reid hit me with something, it was even before I had furniture in my (Colts) office. He said, 'Grigs, just be yourself,'" he said. "I think that kind of let loose the creative juices. I was just kind of like, 'OK, people haven't done this before and gone about things this way' and who cares? I was going to blaze my own path." □

NHL Capsules

Ovechkin nets 37th in testy win vs. Pens

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Alex Ovechkin scored his NHL-leading 37th goal and assisted on Joel Ward's winner with just more than four minutes remaining to lift the Washington Capitals to a testy 3-1 win over the Pittsburgh Penguins on Tuesday night.

Ovechkin beat Marc-Andre Fleury on a breakaway in the first period. The three-time MVP then helped set up Ward's first career goal against the Penguins as Washington improved to 3-0 against Pittsburgh. John Carlson added a short-handed, empty-net goal with 11 seconds remaining. Braden Holtby made 30 saves for the Capitals, who pulled within a point of the third-place Penguins in the crowded Metropolitan Division.

Steve Downie scored his 10th goal of the season for Pittsburgh. Fleury stopped 29 shots but allowed a pair of power-play goals, including Ward's during a 5-on-3 with 4:13 to play.

BLUE JACKETS 5, FLYERS 2

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Matt Calvert scored two goals, including the winner midway through the third period, to lift Columbus over Philadelphia.

Brandon Dubinsky, Ryan Johansen and James Wis-



Nashville Predators center Craig Smith (15) scores a goal against San Jose Sharks goalie Alex Stalock (32) in the first period of an NHL hockey game Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015, in Nashville, Tenn. Associated Press

niewski also scored for the Blue Jackets, who snapped Philadelphia's nine-game points streak.

Wayne Simmonds and Michael Del Zotto had goals for the Flyers, who remained six points behind idle Boston for the Eastern Conference's final playoff spot.

Calvert scored the go-ahead goal with 10:06 left in the final period when he was the beneficiary of a deft pass from Cam Atkinson for an easy goal that put Columbus up 3-2. The play started when Philadel-

phia's Vincent Lecavalier turned the puck over in his zone.

ISLANDERS 4, HURRICANES 1

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Backup goalie Chad Johnson made 37 saves and four players scored to lead the Islanders.

Anders Lee, Brock Nelson, Michael Grabner and John Tavares scored for the Islanders, who took a 3-0 lead in the season series between the first- and last-place teams in the Metropolitan Division. The Islanders improved to 19-3 against the Metro Division

behind Lee's 19th goal of the season, Nelson's 16th and Grabner's sixth for a 3-0 lead.

Carolina, coming off a 6-3 win at Ottawa, outshot New York 18-8 in the second period and 38-30 overall, but couldn't dent Johnson until Jiri Tlustý's goal with 8:46 remaining.

Tavares scored his 28th of the season on an empty net with 4:19 remaining.

The Islanders rebounded from blowing three two-goal leads the previous night in a 6-5 loss to the Rangers.

PREDATORS 5, SHARKS 1

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Pekka Rinne made a season-high 42 saves and Nashville extended its winning streak to a season-best six straight games by beating San Jose.

The Predators scored five unanswered goals for the win. Craig Smith scored twice, and Shea Weber scored and had an assist. Paul Gaustad and James Neal each had a goal, Mike Ribeiro had two assists as the Predators padded their lead atop the NHL standings to 84 points, six ahead of Montreal.

Matt Irwin scored for San Jose. The Sharks, losers of two straight, are 1-4-1 with the Kings looming Saturday at Levi's Stadium.

STARS 4, BLUES 1

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Jamie Benn had his first career hat trick and Kari Lehtonen was stingy in net again for Dallas in a rout of St. Louis.

Blues coach Ken Hitchcock yanked goalie Brian Elliott in favor of Jake Allen after the Stars took a 3-0 lead before the midway mark of the first period, the last two goals coming in a 20-second span.

Jason Spezza had three assists for the Stars, who have won four of five and triumphed on coach Lindy Ruff's 55th birthday. □



French team Gregory Bauge, left, Michael D'Almeida, center, and Kevin Sireau, right, compete during the final of the Men's Team Sprint race at the Track Cycling World Championships in Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, outside Paris, France, Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015. France won gold, New Zealand won silver and Germany won bronze. Associated Press

New Zealand fastest in team pursuit qualifying

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France (AP)

France won gold in the men's team sprint competition at the track cycling world championships on Wednesday after fastest finisher New Zealand was relegated in the final.

New Zealand, the 2014 gold medalists, crossed the line first but saw the medal go instead to Gregory Bauge, Kevin Sireau and Michael d'Almeida of France after race officials ruled that New Zealand's first relay began a fraction of a second too early.

The French squad, which had set the second-fastest qualifying time behind New Zealand's 42:892, improved its bronze medal finish last year with a winning time of 43:136 over three laps of the 250-meter track. Germany finished third.

Chinese riders Jinjie Gong and Tianshi Zhong set a new world record of 32:034 to take home gold in the women's team sprint, ahead of teams from Russia and Australia.

In the other medal race on the competition's first day,

Germany's Stephanie Pohl won gold in the women's points race.

In qualifying for the men's team pursuit, New Zealand set the fastest time of 3:56:421 and will face Switzerland in the next round on Thursday. Second-fastest finishers in the four-man, four kilometer discipline Great Britain will take on Germany for a place in the gold medal race.

Australia, the 2014 champions, managed a fifth-fastest time after a broken crank led to a crash and restart. □

Knicks' Anthony to have season-ending left knee surgery



East Team's Carmelo Anthony (7), of the New York Knicks, scores a basket during the second half of NBA All-Star basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 15, 2015, in New York.

By BRIAN MAHONEY
AP Basketball Writer
GREENBURGH, N.Y. (AP) -- Carmelo Anthony will have surgery on his left knee that could keep him off the court for four to six months. New York Knicks President Phil Jackson said Wednesday a timetable for Anthony's recovery couldn't completely be determined until after the surgery, but early indications were that he could be back on the court this summer and be ready for training camp. Jackson said he anticipated the procedure, which will include a left knee pa-

tella tendon debridement and repair, would be performed this week. "It's obvious that he physically can't do the things that he's capable of doing, so this is a necessary step for him to take, I think, in order for him to get to the level that he's capable of getting to," coach Derek Fisher said. Anthony has had pain for most of the season but continued to play despite the Knicks' league-worst 10-43 record. He was able to start in Sunday night in the All-Star Game at Madison Square Garden but ap-

peared to be struggling, scoring 14 points on 6-of-20 shooting. Jackson said he talked to Anthony last month, after he had missed six straight games, about scheduling the surgery - though said the Knicks were comfortable with Anthony taking part in the All-Star Game. "I had a meeting with him when we were in London and we discussed this process of having the surgery sooner than later," Jackson said, "because we know that the process can take some time for rehab and getting back on the court and we wanted him to be able to make a full recovery and be ready for this coming season." Anthony did not speak to reporters Wednesday. He finished his 12th NBA season averaging 24.2 points and 6.6 rebounds in 40 games. The two-time Olympian turned 30 in May, two months before signing a five-year, \$124 million contract in July, but Jackson said he was confident the former scoring champion would make a full recovery. "We anticipate that as a scorer that's been prolific

in his career, he'll continue to be so," Jackson said. Anthony had knee surgery in 2011 during the offseason, and Jackson said he thought Anthony recovered well from that. He also had fluid drained from his right knee late in the 2012-13 season. The decision on Anthony comes two days after the Knicks waived Amare Stoudemire following

a contract buyout and leaves them severely undermanned for the final 29 games. Fisher believes Anthony may have kept playing this long because of the team's difficulties.

"He struggled with, I think, letting his teammates down and feeling like he wanted to be out there but knew some nights he shouldn't have been," Fisher said. □



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MON-FRI 3:50 | 6:35 | 9:20
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 FRI 5:00 | 7:45 | 10:20
 SAT SAT 2:15 | 5:00 | 7:45 | 10:20
 SUN & HOL 2:15 | 5:00 | 7:45

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CHRIS EVANS | MICHELLE MONAGHAN

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 MON-FRI 5:00 | 7:05
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 SUN & HOL 2:55 | 5:00 | 7:05

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CHANNING TATUM | MILA KUNIS

3D VERSION
 FRI-SAT 10:45
 2D VERSION
 MON-FRI 3:50 | 6:35 | 9:20
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The Wedding Ringer

KEVIN HART | JOSH GAD

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
 MON-THURS 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20
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Nadal wins in Rio in first clay-court match of season

STEPHEN WADE

AP Sports Writer

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) —

Top-seeded Rafael Nadal defeated Thomaz Bellucci of Brazil at the Rio Open on Tuesday, winning 6-4, 6-1 in his first clay-court match of the season.

Nadal had already suffered two early-season losses away from his favored clay surface, so the red clay was a welcome change.

The Spaniard has won nine of the last 10 French Opens and uses the clay-court season in Latin America as a tuneup for Roland Garros.

Second-seeded David Ferrer also advanced in the combined ATP-WTA event, defeating Daniel Gimeno-Traver of Spain 6-4, 6-3. No. 4 Fabio Fognini beat Jiri Vesely of the Czech Republic 6-1, 7-6 (7) to reach the second round.

On the women's side, No. 1 Sara Errani of Italy defeated Brazilian Teliana Pereira 6-3, 6-3. No. 3 Roberta Vinci of Italy won 7-6 (4), 6-3 against Lucie Hradecka of the Czech Republic.



Rafael Nadal of Spain, returns the ball to Thomaz Bellucci of Brazil, in their Rio Open tennis tournament match, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015.

Associated Press

Nadal has said he's free of injuries and illness, which have plagued him the last few seasons.

"The important thing is play a tough match like this in the first round and win," Nadal said. "And always beating someone in

their home country, where he has a lot of support, is tough. I always have a good feeling playing on clay and I'm into the second round. That's that matters."

Nadal, dubbed the "King of Clay," struggled in the first set, making several

strings of unforced errors. He managed to break the fellow lefthander three straight times, but was broken twice himself before closing out the set.

In the second set he broke Bellucci twice in a row to jump to a 4-0 lead before closing out the match 6-1.

"The first set was very even, and Thomaz is very dangerous on this surface," Nadal said. "The second set I started right off with an advantage and I felt more relaxed."

Nadal, who looks much lighter than he was last season, is off Wednesday and returns on Thursday. Ferrer faces qualifier Thiemo De Bakker of the Netherlands on Wednesday.

Two seeded men bowed out of the tournament on Tuesday, with Blaz Rola of Slovenia defeating No. 5 Leonardo Mayer of Argentina 4-6, 7-6 (3), 4-1. Mayer withdrew because of dehydration.

Juan Monaco of Argentina beat No. 7 Santiago Giraldo of Colombia 6-3, 3-0. The Colombian retired with stomach problems.

Errani is also off on Wednesday. No. 2 Irina-Camelia Begu of Romania faces American Bethanie Mattek-Sands, and No. 4 Madison Brengle of the United States faces Dinah Pfizenmaier of Germany. □



Petra Kvitova of Czech returns the ball to Elina Svitolina of Ukraine during the third day of Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015.

Associated Press

SANDRA HARWITT

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) —

Second-seeded Petra Kvitova and fourth-seeded Ana Ivanovic followed defending champion Venus Williams to an early exit at the Dubai Tennis Championships on Wednesday.

In all, five of the top eight

seeded players failed to reach Thursday's quarterfinals: Kvitova, Ivanovic, No. 5 Agnieszka Radwanska, No. 7 Angelique Kerber and No. 8 Williams.

By contrast, top-seeded Simona Halep and third-seeded Caroline Wozniacki scored straight set victories to advance.

Kvitova, the reigning Wim-

Petra Kvitova follows Venus Williams to early exit in Dubai

bledon champion, went down 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 to 13th-seeded Carla Suarez Navarro, while Ivanovic fell to 17th-seeded Karolina Pliskova 6-2, 4-6, 6-4.

Suarez Navarro pulled out of the Antwerp final this past Sunday with a neck injury, but appears in fine form this week.

The eighth-seeded Williams looked listless in the humid 93 degree F (34 C) temperatures.

"I think she played awesome," Williams said. "There were a couple of games there that I didn't even get my racket on the ball. What can I say to that?"

Williams offered Safarova six opportunities to break serve and the Czech player took advantage four times, twice in each set.

"I was firing the ball, serving really well," Safarova said. "I put the pressure (on) right

away from the first point. My lefty serve into her body and mixing the lefty serve with the really flat and fast serves, that seems (to) give her a little trouble."

Joining Williams on the sidelines was Radwanska, who lost to unseeded Garbine Muguruza of Spain 6-4, 6-2.

"I think when you're not playing your best tennis then it's hard to compete with those kind of players," Radwanska said. "I think I didn't serve well enough to win that."

Halep ousted Tsvetana Pironkova 6-4, 6-3, while Wozniacki beat 15th-seeded Alize Cornet, last year's finalist, 6-4, 6-0.

Halep, who lost her serve on double faults in the first game of both sets, said she was unaware of all the seeded players that lost ahead of her on Wednesday.

"It doesn't matter sometimes who wins or who lose, because tennis, it's like you never know what is happening on court," Halep said. So, I take every match like a tough one and I expect everything."

Wozniacki knew of the upsets. Nevertheless, she wasn't concerned she might suffer the same fate. "I think the players that won, it's not like they come out of nowhere," Wozniacki said. "Most of these girls have had a good year or are very high in the rankings. It happens at big tournaments like this."

Elsewhere, seventh-seeded Angelique Kerber was ousted by 10th-seeded Flavia Penetta 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 and sixth-seeded Ekaterina Makarova of Russia defeated Zarina Dijas of Kazakhstan 6-3, 6-4. □

Did NSA plant spyware in computers around world?

BRANDON BAILEY

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Did the National Security Agency plant spyware deep in the hard drives of thousands of computers used by foreign governments, banks and other surveillance targets around the world?

A new report from Russian cybersecurity firm Kaspersky Lab said its researchers identified a new family of malicious programs or worms that infected computers in multiple countries, primarily overseas. Targets appeared to be specifically selected and included military, Islamic activists, energy companies and other businesses, as well as government personnel.

Without naming the United States as the source of the malware, the report said one of the programs has elements in common with the so-called Stuxnet worm, which the New York Times and Washington Post have said was developed by the U.S. and Israeli governments to disrupt Iranian nuclear facilities. Based on



This Oct. 8, 2009 file photo, shows a network cable, taken on Oct. 8, 2009, in Duesseldorf, Germany. Associated Press

their similarities, the creators of both programs "are either the same or working closely together," Kaspersky's report said.

The malware was not designed for financial gain but to collect information through "pure cyberespionage," added Kaspersky

researcher Vitaly Kamluk. In its report, the firm said the malware was extremely sophisticated and "expensive to develop."

NSA spokeswoman Vanee Vines declined comment Tuesday, but cited a 2014 presidential directive that instructed U.S. intelligence

agencies to respect Americans' privacy while continuing to conduct overseas operations necessary to guard against terrorism or other threats.

Kaspersky researchers said some of the spyware was designed to burrow into the essential software that comes pre-installed on a computer's disk drive, known as firmware. Once there, it was difficult to detect and virtually impossible to remove, and it could gain access to vital codes, such as the keys to deciphering encrypted files. Kamluk said compromising firmware is a difficult technical challenge that likely requires knowledge of the manufacturer's source code — normally a closely guarded secret.

The report named several disk drive manufacturers whose products were compromised, including Seagate Technology, Western Digital Corp., Toshiba and IBM Corp. While some did not immediately respond to requests for comment, three companies said the report came as news to them.

"We take such threats very seriously," Western Digital spokesman Steve Shattuck said Tuesday, adding in a statement that the company is "in the process of reviewing the report from Kaspersky Labs."

Seagate Technology said it "has no specific knowledge of any allegations regarding third parties accessing our drives." The company said in a statement it's committed to security and takes steps to prevent tampering or "reverse engineering" of its products. Toshiba said it had no knowledge of the malware and declined further comment.

While some of the malware was transmitted over the Internet, Kaspersky said one worm spread through infected USB thumb drives, allowing it to collect information from computers that are "air-gapped" or disconnected from the Internet. Air-gapping is a security practice used at nuclear plants and other

sensitive facilities.

Kaspersky also said it uncovered "classic spying methods" in which scientists who attended an international conference in Houston were later sent a CD of conference materials from the event's sponsor. The sponsor apparently didn't know that the disc also contained malware which spread into certain attendees' computers, the researchers said.

Kaspersky said it found signs the malware infected computers in more than 30 countries, with the heaviest concentrations in Iran, Russia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and China. There were relatively few targets in the U.S. and Britain, said Kamluk, who characterized them as individuals living or visiting in those countries rather than companies or institutions based there.

Though it's less well-known in the United States, Kaspersky is respected in the cybersecurity industry and its reports are generally viewed as reputable. While some critics have suggested the firm has close ties to Russian authorities, several experts said Tuesday that it's plausible the United States is behind the malware identified in the report.

"A lot of nation-states are involved in these activities. Russia, China and the U.S. are in a great cyberarms race," said David DeWalt, chief executive of the Silicon Valley cybersecurity firm FireEye.

He noted that China has been implicated in attempts to steal source code and other information from U.S. companies, for example, while Russian authorities have been linked to some hacking efforts.

Some warned that U.S. efforts could have unintended consequences: Foreign customers could become more leery of U.S. tech products if they're suspected of being used for spying. And other hackers may be able to exploit the same vulnerabilities, said cybersecurity expert and author Bruce Schneier. □

Juggling too many remotes? Try this touch screen

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

How many remotes does it take to watch television, stream Netflix or record your favorite show on DVR? The Ray Super Remote wants to declutter your coffee table and become the central nervous system of all of your home entertainment systems. The touch-screen device, released Tuesday, is designed to control TVs, cable boxes, DVRs, video game consoles and Internet streaming players such as Roku and Apple TV. What's more, it runs on software that learns viewers' preferences so it can list programs suited to personal interests.

"As we looked at ways to reimagine TV, it seemed like the remote control needed the most help," says David Skokna, CEO of New York-based Ray Enterprises. "We

think we have a big opportunity to do something magical." Priced at \$199, the remote won't be released until May or June, but pre-orders are being accepted online at <http://www.ray.co>. It requires a Wi-Fi system and pay-TV boxes to work properly.

This isn't the first attempt to build a smarter remote control. Logitech and a few other electronics companies have been making universal remote controls for years. More recently, a variety of mobile apps have been offering ways to turn smartphones and tablets into multipurpose remote controls.

After nearly three years developing his device, Skokna is counting on the Ray remote's versatility and intelligence to stand out from the other options on the market.

The Ray remote controls



This product image provided by Ray Enterprises shows the Ray Super Remote.

Associated Press

more than 200,000 devices and can run applications that will enable it to control other Internet-connected home appliances. □

Sony outlines its 3 year recovery plan, and a \$4.2B target

YURI KAGEYAMA
AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Money-losing Sony will spin off its video-and-sound business into a separate company and shrink its headquarters as part of a three-year turnaround plan to speed up decision-making and become profitable again.

The company is targeting an operating profit of 500 billion yen (\$4.2 billion) and a 10 percent return on equity for the fiscal year through March 2018, but it won't target sales, highlighting its new approach of valuing profitability and not going after size.

"The Sony spirit is about doing what others didn't dare to do" Chief Executive Kazuo Hirai said Wednesday in outlining the company's strategy.

Sony must not be afraid to change if it hoped "to grow in a Sony-like way," Hirai told reporters at the Japanese electronics and entertainment company's Tokyo head office.

Hirai pointed to image sensors that are used in devices such as smartphones and self-parking cars, entertainment operations such as TV programming and the PlayStation game business as potential areas for growth.

The video-and-sound unit will become more independent by October, he said. Other parts of Sony's sprawling empire may also be spun off, such as computer chips and batteries, but details were not yet decided, said Hirai.

Sony will also invest in innovative areas, including through acquisitions and partnerships, although he didn't announce specific deals, according to Hirai.

Sony said it still sees its film division as a driver of growth. It has said it does not expect long-term damage from the cyberattack that became public in December, over a Sony Pictures movie called "The Interview" which spoofs an assassination of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. □

US stock market ends mostly lower

STEVE ROTHWELL

AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. stock market edged mostly lower on Wednesday, easing back from its latest all-time highs.

The markets barely budged following the midafternoon release of minutes from the Federal Reserve's January meeting. The transcript showed that policymakers were less likely to raise interest rates in June than investors previously thought. The decline follows two straight days of record closing highs for the Standard & Poor's 500 index.

"The market had really gathered steam around a June tightening date, the minutes seem to have walked that back a bit," said David Lafferty, chief market strategist at Natixis Global Asset Management.

The Dow Jones industrial average slipped 17.73 points, or 0.1 percent, to 18,029.85. The S&P 500 eased 0.7 point, or 0.03 percent, to 2,099.68. The index closed at an all-time high of 2,100.34 on Tuesday.

The Nasdaq composite rose 7.10 points, or 0.1 percent, to 4,906.36.

Major stock indexes opened lower early Wednesday. Energy stocks declined as the price of oil fell amid speculation that a recent rally in crude was excessive.

The price of benchmark U.S. crude, which had been rising last week, fell \$1.39 to \$52.14 a barrel Wednesday. The price of oil has jumped 16 percent since bottoming out at the end of January after a seven-month slump.

Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils used by many U.S. refineries, fell \$2 to \$60.53 a barrel.

Investors hammered Fossil Group's shares after the re-

percent, to \$83.69.

Stocks continued to drift lower ahead of the release of the meetings from the Fed's January meeting.

But the declines eased after 2 p.m. Eastern time, when the minutes appeared to ease any concerns that the central bank would raise rates anytime soon.

The minutes revealed that officials were concerned about the impact on finan-

Officials noted that wage growth has remained weak even as the unemployment rate has declined. Inflation remains below the Fed's 2 percent target. The Fed's benchmark interest rate has been at a record low near zero since December 2008.

Government bonds rallied after the release of the Fed's minutes. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note, which moves inversely to



Trader Michael Gagliano works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York. The U.S. stock market edged mostly lower on Wednesday, easing back from its latest all-time highs. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

tailer issued a disappointing fourth-quarter earnings report and outlook. The stock fell the most among companies in the S&P 500, shedding \$15.63, or 15.7

cial markets of dropping the word "patient" from their communications, when describing how long they were willing to wait before raising rates.

its price, fell to 2.08 percent from 2.14 percent late Tuesday.

All told, four of the 10 sectors in the S&P 500 ended lower. □

Fed officials in no hurry to raise rates

MARTIN CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve officials struggled last month to assess when economic data might prompt them to raise interest rates from record lows — and how best to convey their intentions to investors. Minutes of the Fed's Jan. 27-28 meeting released Wednesday suggest that policymakers aren't ready to start raising rates anytime soon, with some expressing concerns about excessively low inflation, lingering weakness in the U.S. job market and economic

threats overseas.

The Fed's benchmark interest rate has been near zero since December 2008.

Many officials "observed that a premature increase in rates might damp the apparent solid recovery in real activity and labor market conditions," said the minutes, released after a customary three-week delay.

Analysts said they believed the minutes made a June rate hike less likely, given the concerns expressed by various Fed officials about the state of the economy.

"A fair number of policymakers still want reassur-

ance that growth will remain strong and inflation will return to the 2 percent target before beginning the normalization process," said Sal Guatieri, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets.

He added that the minutes raised the odds that the first rate hike will be delayed until September or possibly even later.

Wall Street investors reacted favorably to the minutes. Losses in the stock market eased and bond prices rose, pulling the yield on the 10-year note down to 2.07 percent from 2.14 percent

late Tuesday.

The minutes indicate that policymakers were worried about dropping the word "patient" to describe how long they were willing to wait, fearing that financial markets might overreact. They also were unable to determine what exactly they needed to see in economic data to begin normalizing monetary policy. What they did agree on was that "it would be difficult to specify in advance an exhaustive list of economic indicators and the values that these indicators would need to take." □

Drugmaker Actavis planning name change to Allergan

TOM MURPHY
AP Business Writer

Drugmaker Actavis is planning to change its name as it draws closer to finishing another big deal, the \$66 billion purchase of Botox maker Allergan that it announced last fall. Actavis said Wednesday that it will adopt the Allergan corporate name after securing Actavis share-

holders' approval for the switch at its annual meeting later this year. Ireland-based Actavis outbid Canadian drugmaker Valeant Pharmaceuticals for Allergan with an offer of about \$219 in cash and stock for each share. Both Actavis and Allergan shareholders are scheduled to vote on the deal March 10. Allergan is

based in Irvine, California. Actavis plans to use its new corporate name for its global portfolio of branded drugs, but it will keep Actavis for certain regions and products. Actavis CEO Brent Saunders said in a statement from the company that the change will help ensure "that our corporate identity reflects the dramatic

evolution of our company within the pharmaceutical industry." Actavis has grown rapidly through several acquisitions over the past few years. It completed a \$28 billion purchase of Forest Laboratories last year. Before that, the drugmaker spent \$8.5 billion on Warner Chilcott and moved its headquarters to Ireland

from New Jersey after merging with Watson Pharmaceuticals. The company said Wednesday at its annual investor meeting in New York that it has nine potential treatments in mid- or late-stage clinical development, and it sees growth opportunities in key specialties like women's health and the center nervous system. □

Virgin America shares soar on better-than-expected 4Q profit

DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Shares of Virgin America Inc. rose Wednesday after the airline easily beat Wall Street expectations for fourth-quarter profit thanks to cheaper jet fuel and more crowded planes. The airline expects to continue getting a break on fuel prices in the first quarter. And it said that a key revenue figure would be flat in the quarter, which is better than some analysts were predicting. CEO David Cush said that travel demand seemed to weaken slightly in November and December, but bookings are picking up for March and April. He thinks people saved their initial windfall from cheaper gasoline instead of spending it.

"I think there is only so much appetite in this country for saving money and paying down debt, so it looks like people are getting back out" and spending in stores and on airline tickets, Cush

said in an interview. In afternoon trading, the shares were up 84 cents, or 2.5 percent, to \$35.06 after peaking at \$37.82 earlier in the day. The airline, backed by British billionaire Richard Branson, complet-

ed an initial public offering of stock in November with a 30 percent gain in one day, but the shares had



A Virgin America jet that departed from Los Angeles arrives at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport in Grapevine, Texas. Shares of Virgin America Inc. rose Wednesday after the airline easily beat Wall Street expectations for fourth-quarter profit thanks to cheaper jet fuel and more crowded planes.
(AP Photo/LM Otero)

ed an initial public offering of stock in November with a 30 percent gain in one day, but the shares had

per share, beating the Street forecast of 80 cents per share, according to FactSet.

Revenue rose 3.4 percent to \$372.2 million from \$359.9 million, beating analysts' forecast of \$370.8 million.

The Burlingame, California-based company said that a key figure, revenue for

Becker, an analyst with Cowen and Co., said she expected a decline of 2 percent.

The company forecast it will pay between \$2.45 and \$2.55 per gallon for jet fuel in the first quarter, down from \$2.87 in late 2014 and reflecting the recent dive in oil prices. Cheaper fuel helped offset higher labor costs for Virgin.

The average fare fell 1.4 percent to \$204.33, as the company has engaged in a fare war with Southwest Airlines in Dallas since October, when long-haul flights were allowed to and from Love Field, a smaller rival to Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. Cush called the Dallas market "turbulent" but said, "this will work itself out."

Virgin America announced Wednesday that it will expand in Dallas by adding flights to Austin — a route dominated today by Southwest — on April 28. Virgin will offer five daily round trips, half as many as Southwest. □

Swiss probe HSBC subsidiary for money laundering

GEIR MOULSON
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Geneva prosecutors searched the premises of HSBC's Swiss subsidiary on Wednesday after launching a money-laundering investigation over a report that the bank helped hide millions of dollars for drug traffickers, arms dealers and celebrities.

Prosecutors said they were investigating HSBC Private Bank (Suisse) SA and persons unknown for

suspected aggravated money laundering. The investigation could later be extended to people suspected of committing or participating in money laundering, they said in a statement. The investigation stemmed from "the recent public revelations" about the private bank, prosecutors said. They said a search at its premises in Geneva was carried out Wednesday, but gave no details. Last week's report from

the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and several news organizations found that the bank hid millions of dollars as it helped wealthy people around the world dodge taxes.

It was based on leaked documents covering the period up to 2007 and relating to accounts worth \$100 billion held by more than 100,000 people and legal entities from 200 countries. A former HSBC employee,

Herve Falciani, gave the data to French tax authorities in 2008. France shared it with other governments and launched investigations. The French newspaper Le Monde obtained a version of the data and shared the material with the ICJ, which analyzed the material together with other international media.

Some details of such operations were disclosed previously, when HSBC — which is based in London

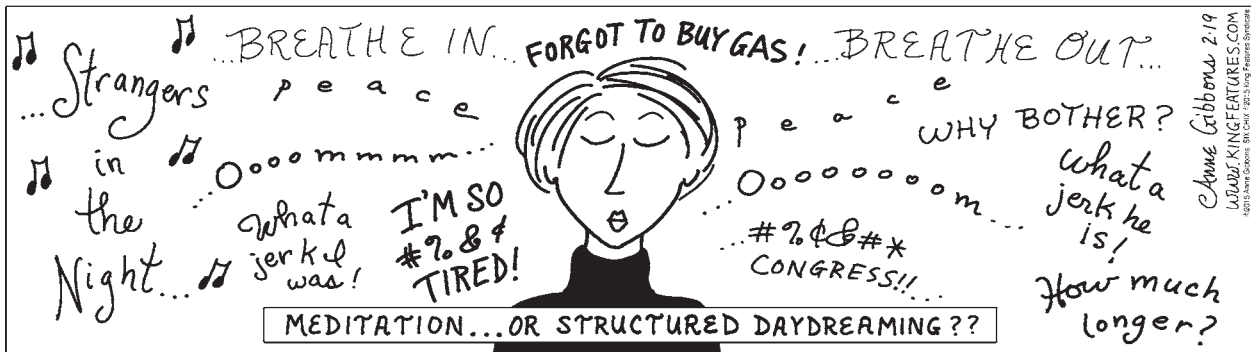
but has operations globally — was fined in 2012 by the U.S. for allowing criminals to use its branches for money laundering. But this month's report disclosed a more detailed cache of data and information.

"We have cooperated continuously with the Swiss authorities since first becoming aware of the data theft in 2008 and we continue to cooperate," HSBC's Swiss subsidiary said in a brief emailed statement Wednesday. □

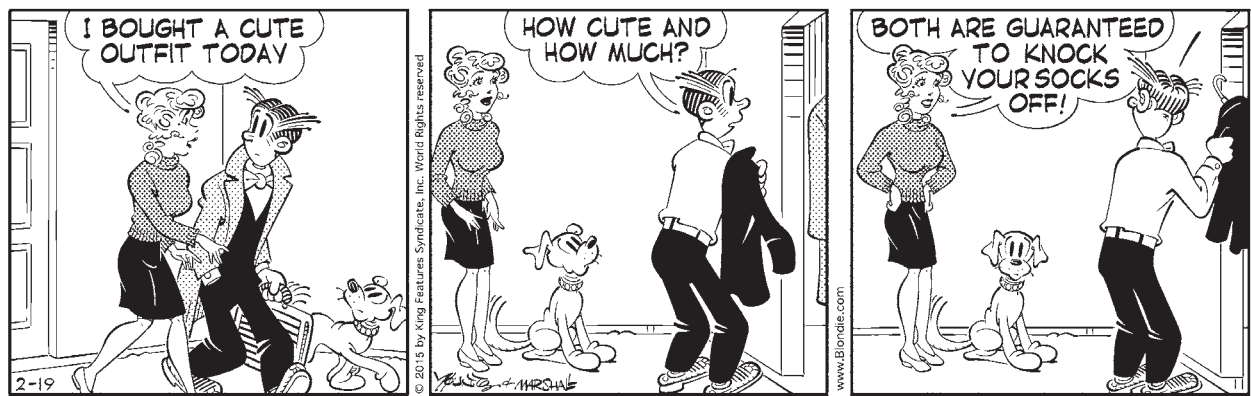
Mutts



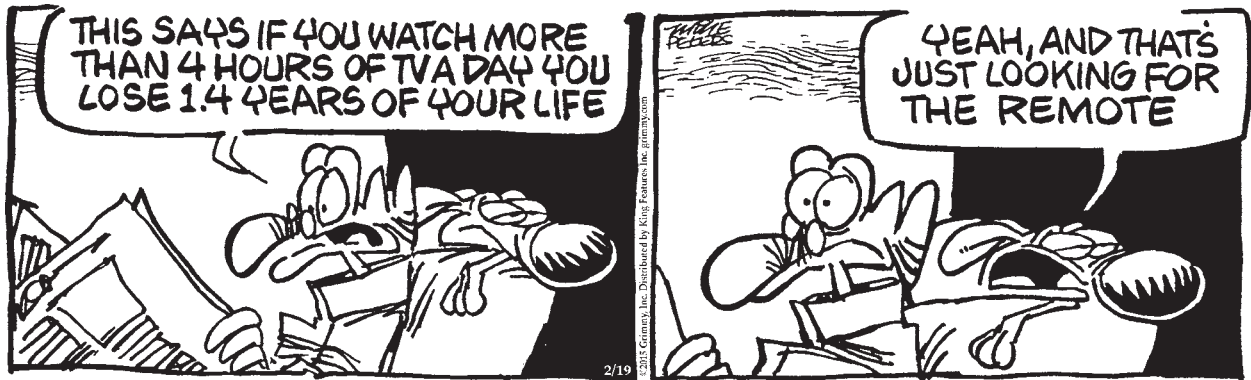
6 Chix



Blondie



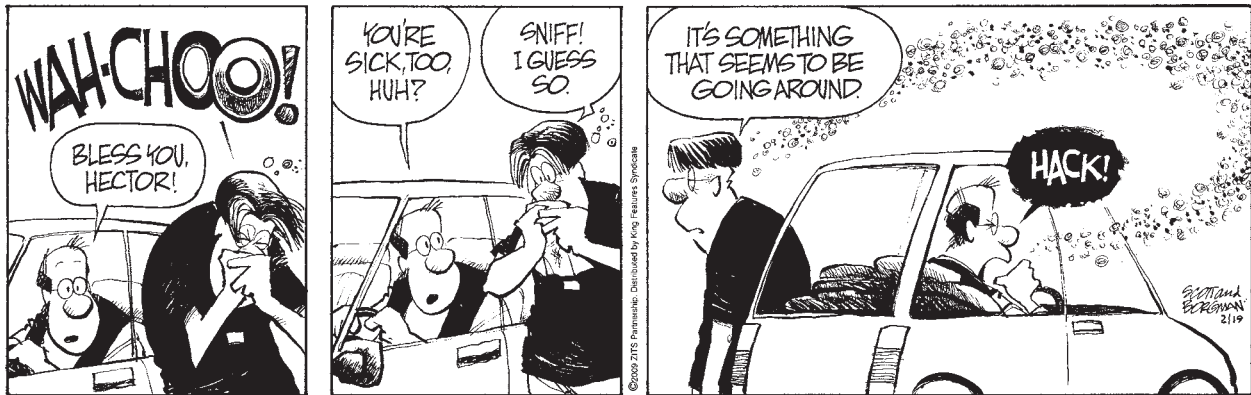
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			7		5			
3								8
	9	4			1	5	3	
5		2						6
				6				
4						3		5
	1	3	9			7	6	
2								9
			6		7			

Difficulty Level ★★★

2/19

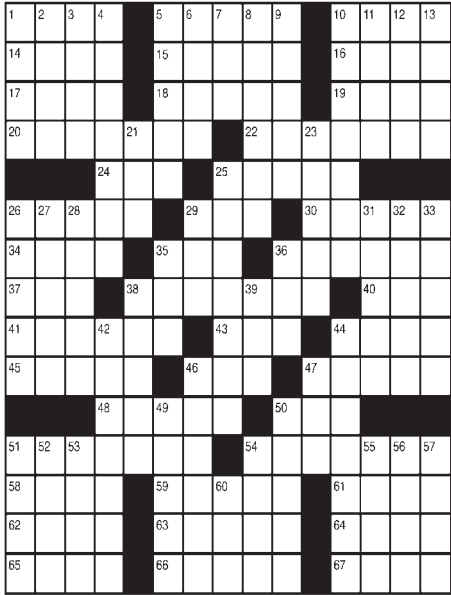
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

1	5	2	8	4	7	3	6	9
9	3	4	6	2	5	8	1	7
6	8	7	1	9	3	4	5	2
8	1	6	7	5	2	9	3	4
2	7	9	3	6	4	5	8	1
3	4	5	9	8	1	2	7	6
5	9	1	2	7	8	6	4	3
7	2	8	4	3	6	1	9	5
4	6	3	5	1	9	7	2	8

ACROSS

- 1 on; trampled
- 5 costs; by any means
- 10 Velvety green ground cover
- 14 Italy's capital
- 15 Shinbone
- 16 Crash; ram
- 17 Lofty poems
- 18 Unlocks
- 19 Read quickly
- 20 Bowling
- 22 Drug sellers
- 24 Pub beverage
- 25 Author Jules
- 26 Blacksmith's iron block
- 29 Knotts or Shula
- 30 Cheese-topped tortilla chip
- 34 One listed in a will
- 35 Purchase
- 36 Astrology chart
- 37 Go wrong
- 38 Escapee
- 40 "Along, Little Dogies"
- 41 Former teen idol Frankie
- 43 Space
- 44 Lunch spot
- 45 Put off
- 46 NM's neighbor
- 47 24 gold
- 48 Vacillate
- 50 "huggers; pants for Elvis
- 51 Adept
- 54 King Arthur's home
- 58 Walk the floor
- 59 Stringed instrument
- 61 Not taped
- 62 "Woe is me!"
- 63 Rotates
- 64 Spike & Pinky
- 65 Certain bills
- 66 Crush
- 67 Dad's sister



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/19/15

- 4 Hopelessness
- 5 Make amends
- 6 off; give a heads-up to
- 7 Lincoln, for one
- 8 Flowering tree
- 9 High-powered surgical beam
- 10 Deceive
- 11 more; again
- 12 Celebrity
- 13 Male children
- 21 Sick
- 23 Bother
- 25 Seafarer
- 26 off; before
- 27 Boldness
- 28 Went; was viewed widely on YouTube
- 29 Push for payment
- 31 Stogie
- 32 Largest city in northern Israel
- 33 Group of eight
- 35 Simple hairdo
- 36 Electrocute
- 38 Fit for a king
- 39 Ear secretion

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

P	A	R	E	S	S	L	A	M	A	G	O	G
A	G	O	N	Y	H	U	L	A	L	A	N	E
P	E	A	R	S	A	C	E	S	F	I	S	T
A	D	D	I	T	I	V	E	C	O	R	N	E
C	E	D	E	H	O	N	E	S	T	Y		
A	S	T	H	M	A	G	A	T	E	S		
B	E	A	S	H	O	A	L	S	C	A	L	E
C	A	M	P	O	U	S	T	S	O	L	A	Y
S	L	E	E	P	N	E	S	T	S	E	W	E
A	L	E	C	S	R	E	C	E	S	S		
O	B	S	C	U	R	E	D	A	L	E		
R	E	P	O	S	E	P	O	W	E	R	F	U
E	L	E	C	R	O	C	C	E	A	S	E	
O	I	N	K	T	U	R	K	T	A	K	E	N
S	E	T	S	E	E	S	S	L	E	D	S	

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2/19/15

- 42 Actress Lucy
- 44 A; like the song of a choir with no organ
- 46 Monotony
- 49 Sleeveless tops
- 50 Severe
- 51 Quarrel
- 52 Hardy cabbage
- 53 "see clearly now..."
- 54 Tins
- 55 In of; as a substitute for
- 56 Kiln
- 57 Examination
- 60 -la-la...

Classifieds

DOCTOR ON DUTY
Oranjestad
Dr. van Trigt

EMERGENCIA 911



POLIS	100
POLIS	581-1100
ORANJESTAD	582-4000
NOORD	587-0009
STA. CRUZ	585-4710
SAVANETA	584-7000
SAN NICOLAS	584-5000
FIRE DEPT.	115
FIRE DEPT.	582-1108
POLIS TIPLINE	11141
HOSPITAL	527-4000
AMBULANCE	582-1234
SAN NICOLAS	
AMBULANCE	584-5050

PHARMACY

Oranjestad: del Pueblo Tel: 582-1253
San Nicolas: San Lucas Tel: 584-5119

INFORMATION	118
SETAR	582-2116
TAXI	582-5900
TAXI-TAS	587-5900
PROF. TAXI	588-0035
TAXI D.T.S.	587-2300
SERVICE ARUBA	583-3232

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Coral Princess

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Legend of the Seas

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14 540 \$5,000

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10 521 \$8,500

9 135 \$9,000

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vr.realty@mac.com

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phone US 508-651-0016

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Millions at risk from rapid sea rise in swampy Sundarbans

KATY DAIGLE

AP Environment Writer

BALI ISLAND, India (AP) —

The tiny hut sculpted out of mud at the edge of the sea is barely large enough for Bokul Mondol and his family to lie down in. The water has taken everything else from them, and one day it almost certainly will take this, too.

Saltwater long ago engulfed the 5 acres where Mondol once grew rice and tended fish ponds, as his ancestors had on Bali Island for some 200 years. His thatch-covered hut,



In this Feb. 1, 2015 photo, a partly broken embankment is seen near Satyanarayanpur village in the Sundarbans, India.

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built on public land, is the fifth he has had to build in the last five years as the sea creeps in.

"Every year we have to move a little further inland," he said.

Seas are rising more than twice as fast as the global average here in the Sundarbans, a low-lying delta region of about 200 islands in the Bay of Bengal where some 13 million impoverished Indians and Bangladeshis live. Tens of thousands like Mondol have already been left homeless, and scientists predict much of the Sundarbans could be underwater in 15 to 25 years.

That could force a singularly massive exodus of millions of "climate refugees," creating enormous challenges for India and Bangladesh that neither country has prepared for.

"This big-time climate migration is looming on the horizon," said Tapas Paul, a New Delhi-based environmental specialist with the World Bank, which is spend-

ing hundreds of millions of dollars assessing and preparing a plan for the Sundarbans region.

"If all the people of the Sundarbans have to migrate, this would be the largest-ever migration in the history of mankind," Paul said. The largest to date occurred during the India-Pakistan partition in 1947, when 10 million people or more migrated from one country to the other.

Mondol has no idea where he would go. His family of six is now entirely dependent on neighbors who have not lost their land. Some days they simply don't eat.

"For 10 years I was fighting with the sea, until finally everything was gone," he says, staring blankly at the water lapping at the muddy coast. "We live in constant fear of flooding. If the island is lost, we will all die." On their own, the Sundarbans' impoverished residents have little chance of moving before catastrophe hits. Facing constant threats from roving tigers

and crocodiles, deadly swarms of giant honeybees and poisonous snakes, they struggle to eke out a living by farming, shrimping, fishing and collecting honey from the forests.

Each year, with crude tools and bare hands, they build mud embankments to keep saltwater and wild animals from invading their crops. And each year swollen rivers, monsoon rains and floods wash many of those banks and mud-packed homes back into the sea. Most struggle on far less than \$1 a day. With 5 million people on the Indian side and 8 million in Bangladesh, the Sundarbans population is far greater than any of the small island nations that also face dire threats from rising sea levels.

Losing the 26,000-square-kilometer (10,000-square-mile) region — an area about the size of Haiti — would also take an environmental toll. The Sundarbans region is teeming with wildlife, including the

world's only population of mangrove forest tigers. The freshwater swamps and their tangles of mangrove forests act as a natural buffer protecting India's West Bengal state and Bangladesh from cyclones.

With the warming climate melting polar ice and rising temperatures expanding oceans, seas have been rising globally at an average rate of about 3 millimeters a year — a rate scientists say is likely to speed up. The latest projections suggest seas could rise on average up to about 1 meter (3.3 feet) this century.

That would be bad enough for the Sundarbans, where the highest point is around 3 meters (9.8 feet) and the mean elevation is less than a meter above sea level. But sea rise occurs unevenly across the globe because of factors like wind, ocean currents, tectonic shift and variations in the Earth's gravitational pull. The rate of sea rise in the Sundarbans has been measured at twice the global rate or even higher. In addition, dams and irrigation systems upstream are trapping sediments that could have built up the river deltas that make up the Sundarbans. Other human activities such as deforestation encourage erosion. A 2013 study by the Zoological Society of London measured the Sundarbans coastline retreating at about 200 meters (650 feet) a year. The Geological Survey of India says at least 210 square kilometers (81 square miles) of coastline on the Indian side has eroded in the last few decades. At least four islands are underwater and dozens of others have been abandoned due to sea rise and erosion. □

Associated Press

50 shades of green:

How studio roped men into seeing 'Grey'

LINDSEY BAHR
AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — When Universal bumped "Fifty Shades of Grey" from August 2014 to Valentine's Day, 2015, it seemed like a cheesy gimmick. Now that box office results are in, it's clear that was the most brilliant stroke of all. The adaptation of author EL James' erotic novel debuted to an astounding \$94.4 million domestic and \$172 million international across the long President's Day weekend, breaking box office records for the month of February, female filmmakers and R-rated movies in what is proving to be a perfect storm of intrigue, brand, and crafty execution by Universal Pictures.

"Fifty Shades of Grey" was always expected to be a fruitful endeavor — that's why nearly every studio in town clamored to scoop up the rights to James' phenomenally successful trilogy in 2012. When Focus Features and parent company Universal were the lucky winners, the hype only intensified as fans hungered for everything from casting rumors, to first photos of stars Dakota Johnson and Jamie Dornan, and clues about what would make the final cut.

But fans alone don't explain a blockbuster debut, especially when the entire Northeast was battling severe winter storms.

Produced for a modest \$40 million with no tested star-power in front of the camera, Universal and Focus were hedging their bets from the beginning, keeping costs reasonable and stoking the buzz machine with a coy marketing campaign playing on the interest of those who hadn't read the book.

Not only did it spark a culture-wide dialogue, it became an event movie centered on a single date: Valentine's Day.

"It follows in the tradition of the edgier, naughtier, so-called romance mov-



In this image released by Universal Pictures and Focus Features, Dakota Johnson, left, and Jamie Dornan appear in a scene from "Fifty Shades of Grey."

Associated Press

ies, and that paid off. Audiences like a good R-rated escape," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box office firm Rentrak, noting racy films like "Last Tango in Paris," "9 ½ Weeks," and "Basic Instinct."

"Fifty Shades of Grey" is poised to surpass all of them.

"Certainly the fan base came out, but to reach these numbers, you have to go broader than the built-in audience," added Gitesh Pandya, editor of BoxOfficeGuru.com.

The somewhat random fact that Valentine's Day fell on a Saturday in 2015 was key: it ensured that interest would stay high for at least the first two days of theatrical release.

Day one would be for the die-hard fans. Day two would be for the couples.

"That was a shrewd move," said Pandya. "This is the one weekend of the entire year where men will see a film that they do not want to see. The other 51 weeks of the year are a little different."

Whereas most films with ardent fan bases drop off dramatically on day two, "Fifty Shades of Grey" grew. The first "Twilight"

film fell 40.8 percent on its second day. "Fifty Shades" spiked 21 percent.

Nick Carpou, Universal's President of Domestic distribution sees the film as a resounding victory on all levels. He credited the "careful choice" of a re-

lease date and an enticing marketing campaign that emphasized "qualities of the piece that are universally accepted," such as romance.

"We overachieved in the South and the South Central and, interestingly, in the

Northeast, which is weather challenged," said Carpou. "It's a very motivated audience base."

An estimated 68 percent of opening weekend audiences was female (that number was even higher on Friday night), with 42 percent under the age of 25-years-old for the R-rated film. Racially, an estimated 52 percent were Caucasian, 22 percent Hispanic, 15 percent African American, and seven percent Asian.

Still, moviegoers didn't seem to be thrilled with the results. According to market research firm CinemaScore, audiences gave the film a dismal C+ rating.

"I'm expecting very large declines and rapid erosion in the days and weeks to come. This is one that is not going to have much stamina going forward," said Pandya.

That said, Pandya does note that the way the movie is tracking internationally, it could ultimately make over \$600 million worldwide. □

Michael Douglas to receive George Eastman Award in May

ROCHESTER, New York (AP)

— Academy Award winner Michael Douglas will receive the George Eastman Award for his contributions to the film industry. The George Eastman House said Wednesday that the star of films including "Wall Street" and "Basic Instinct" will receive the award during a May 14 ceremony at the Dryden Theatre, followed by a black-tie gala at the Rochester museum dedicated to photography and motion picture. Douglas has produced and acted in more than 75 films and television series. He won one Oscar for best actor for 1987's "Wall Street" and one for best film for co-producing "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" in 1975. The East-



In this Feb. 15, 2015 file photo, actor Michael Douglas attends the SNL 40th Anniversary Special at Rockefeller Plaza in New York.

Associated Press

man Award, established in 1955, is named for the photography innovator who founded Rochester-based Eastman Kodak. Previous

award winners include Charlie Chaplin, Gregory Peck, Martin Scorsese, Meryl Streep and Richard Gere. □

Recently discovered Dr. Seuss book coming out in July

NEW YORK (AP) — More than 20 years after his death, there is still plenty of news about Dr. Seuss. Random House Children's Books said Wednesday it will publish a recently discovered manuscript with illustrations called "What Pet Should I Get?" on July 28. The publisher plans at least two more books, based on materials found in 2013 in the author's home in La Jolla, California, by his widow and secretary. The author whose real name was Theodor Geisel died in 1991.

Random House associate publishing director Cathy Goldsmith says "What Pet Should I Get?" was likely written between 1958 and



This book cover image released by Random House shows "What Should I Get Pete," by Dr. Seuss.

Associated Press

1962. The book features the same brother and sister seen in Dr. Seuss' 1960 classic "One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish." □

Songwriters Hall's new class includes Lauper, Toby Keith

NEW YORK (AP) — Cyndi Lauper, Toby Keith and Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia will be inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in June.

The organization announced Wednesday that Linda Perry, country music songwriter Bobby Braddock and "Hoochie Coochie Man" writer Willie Dixon will also be inducted on June 18. Garcia and lyricist Robert Hunter will be inducted as a duo for their songwriting work for Grateful Dead. Perry has written hits such as Christina Aguilera's "Beautiful" as well as songs for Pink and Alicia Keys. The hall's 46th Annual Induction and Awards Dinner



In this April 28, 2014 file photo, singer-songwriter Cyndi Lauper performs in concert at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

will take place at the Marriott Marquis in New York City. Garcia and Dixon will be inducted posthumously. Tom Petty, Vince Gill, Elvis Costello and Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds were part of the acts considered for induction this year. □

Ruth E. Carter's meeting with Spike Lee changed everything



This Nov. 11, 2014 file photo shows costume designer Ruth E. Carter attending the AFI FEST 2014 "Selma" screening held at the Egyptian Theatre, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

LINDSEY BAHR
AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Selma" costume designer Ruth E. Carter never set out to work in Hollywood.

Even while living in a tiny apartment in Los Angeles' Koreatown in the 1980s, Carter found herself not on film sets, but working for local theater companies and designing for dance troupes in her spare time.

"I was a snobby theater person, you know? I didn't really think very much of film," Carter said in a recent phone interview.

With more than 45 film credits and two Oscar nominations in the past 25 years, Carter has carved out an enviable spot for herself in the industry, working with everyone from Lee Daniels and Steven Spielberg to Joss Whedon and Gina Prince-Bythewood. On Thursday, she'll receive the Visionary Award at "Essence" magazine's 8th annual Black Women in Hollywood Luncheon for her contributions to entertainment.

But none of it might have happened had Carter not been introduced to a young independent filmmaker named Spike Lee at just the right moment.

As Carter remembers it, she

met Lee at the Lula Washington Dance Center in Los Angeles. The company had become an "overnight sensation," thanks to a particularly noteworthy performance set to the music of Stevie Wonder.

"I would go after work every night and watch it all over again," she said, partially because she just enjoyed it and partially because in dance, there's always something that needs maintenance or repairs.

One night, one of Carter's college friends brought Lee, who had not yet gone to Cannes with "She's Got to Have It." A friendship quickly developed and Lee advised Carter to get some film experience by signing up to work on student thesis projects at schools like USC and UCLA. She did, and Lee then hired her as costume designer on "School Daze."

She and Lee have since collaborated on a dozen films, including "Do the Right Thing," "Crooklyn," "Clockers," and "Malcolm X," for which she scored her first Oscar nomination. (Her second was for Steven Spielberg's "Amistad").

"I think that I have been led to do this. It's something that I love and that's a passion. It's something you can

wake up every day and be excited about. I think that the industry has captured that in me and it has continued to seek me out because of it," Carter said.

While Carter has her muse in Carmen Ejogo, who she dressed as Coretta Scott King in "Selma" and in the '60s period piece "Sparkle," she said that one actor she would love to dress is Tom Hardy.

"Oh my God, he's so good...he cares about the subtleties of character," Carter said.

While work in the industry has been steady enough over the years, Carter is dismayed by the lack of diversity behind the camera and in the stories that get to be told on film.

"Not just African-American but yellow, red, green and blue, you know," she said. "It makes the world of Hollywood seem very biased and very much like a club in a sense."

Carter recalled the "heart-break" of finding out in 2014 that "Lee Daniels' The Butler" had not received any Oscar nominations and feels that this year "Selma," nominated for best picture and best song, was overlooked by the Academy.

"I'm a member of the Academy and I will do my part in bringing other people of color into the membership, but we've got a long way to go," she said. "It's not something that is going to happen immediately."

As far as her own career is concerned, Carter said she just wants to know that she's been considered for different types of projects.

"I don't think I'm the first person they think of when Jennifer Aniston is going to do "Cake," but I could do Jennifer Aniston in "Cake." I could do Reese Witherspoon in "Wild," but I'm not the first person that they think of," said Carter.

"We're making film so fast and everything is such a risk that nobody wants to take what they feel looks like an obvious risk." □

Call Off the Dogs



MAUREEN DOWD

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WASHINGTON - I'll pay for this column.

The Rottweilers will be unleashed. Once the Clintons had a War Room. Now they have a Slime Room. Once they had the sly James Carville, fondly known as "serpenthead." Now they have the slippery David Brock, accurately known as a snake.

Brock fits into the Clinton tradition of opportunistic knife-fighters like Dick Morris and Mark Penn.

The silver-haired 52-year-old, who sports colorful designer suits and once wore a monocle, brawled his way into a Times article about the uneasy marriage between Hillary Clinton's veteran attack dogs and the group of advisers who are moving over from Obamaland. Hillary hasn't announced a 2016 campaign yet. She's busy polling more than 200 policy experts on how to show that she really cares about the poor while courting the banks. Yet her shadow campaign is already in a déjà-vu-all-over-again shark fight over control of the candidate and her money. It's the same old story: The killer organization that, even with all its ruthless hired guns, can't quite shoot straight.

Squabbling competing factions helped Hillary squander a quarter-of-a-billion dollars in 2008.

As Nicholas Confessore and Amy Choick chronicled, the nasty dispute spilled into public and Brock resigned last week from the board of a pro-Clinton super PAC called Priorities USA Action - whose co-chairman is Jim Messina, Obama's 2012 campaign manager - accusing the political action committee of "an orchestrated political hit job" and "the kind of dirty trick I've witnessed in the right-wing and would not tolerate then."

He should know.

The former "right-wing hit man," and impresario of "dirty tricks," as Brock has said of himself, made his living in the '90s sliming Anita Hill as "a little bit nutty and a little bit slutty" and breaking the Troopergate story, which accused Arkansas state troopers of setting up liaisons for Bill Clinton and spurred Paula Jones' 1994 sexual harassment lawsuit. He has tried to discredit anyone who disagreed with his ideological hits (myself and reporters I know included). And that's still the business he's in, simply on the other side as a Hillary zealot. (His conversion began in 1996 when he published a biography of Hillary that was not a total hit job and that began the thaw.) Just as Bill Clinton was able to forgive another architect of the vast right-wing conspiracy, Richard Mellon Scaife, once

Scaife was charmed by Hillary in person and began giving money to the Clinton foundation, so, too, was Bill won over by Brock's book, "Blinded by the Right: The Conscience of an Ex-Conservative," and Brock's Media Matters and Correct the Record websites, which ferociously push back against any Hillary coverage that isn't fawning.

With the understood blessing of the Clintons, Brock runs a \$28 million cluster of media monitoring groups and oppo research organizations that are vehicles to rebut and at times discredit and threaten anyone who casts a gimlet eye at Clinton Inc.

As Confessore and Choick wrote, he uses a fundraiser named Mary Pat Bonner, whose firm has collected millions of dollars in commissions - a practice many fundraising experts consider unethical. Everyone wants to be at the trough for this one because Hillary is likely to raise, and more important, spend more than \$1 billion on her campaign.

The Clinton crowd is trying to woo Brock back into the fold because he's good at getting money and knows how their enemies think. The Clintons appreciate the fact that Brock, like Morris, is a take-no-prisoners type with the ethical compass of a jackal. Baked in the tactics of the right, Brock will never believe that negative coverage results from legitimate shortcomings. Instead, it's all personal, all false, and all a war.

This is a bad harbinger for those who had hoped that Hillary would "kill off the wild dogs," as one Obama loyalist put it, and Bill would leave behind the sketchy hangers-on in the mold of Ron Burkle and Jeffrey Epstein.

Hillary's inability to dispense with brass-knuckle, fanatical acolytes like Brock shows that she still has an insecure streak that requires Borgia-like blind loyalty, and can't distinguish between the real vast right-wing conspiracy and the voices of legitimate concern.

Money-grubbing is always the ugly place with the Clintons, who have devoured \$2.1 billion in contributions since 1992 to their political campaigns, family foundation and philanthropies, according to The Old (Good) New Republic.

David Axelrod, the author of a new memoir, "Believer," wrote that Hillary's past gurus, Morris and Penn, were nonbelievers - mercenary, manipulative and avaricious. He told Politico's Glenn Thrush that he would have advised Hillary not to cash in with her book and six-figure speeches. Axelrod reiterated to me that Hillary's designated campaign chairman, John Podesta, Bill Clinton's last chief of staff who left his post as an Obama counselor Friday, "has the strength and standing to enforce a kind of campaign discipline that hasn't existed before." But, for now, what Republicans say about government is true of the Clintons: They really do believe that your money belongs to them.

Someday, they should give their tin cup to the Smithsonian. It's one of the wonders of the world. □



Unpaid, Unarmed Lifesavers in Syria



NICHOLAS KRISTOF

© 2015 New York Times

Who would have thought there could be an uplifting story from Syria?

Yet side by side with the worst of humanity, you often see the best. In Syria, that's a group of volunteers called the White Helmets. Its members rush to each bombing and claw survivors from the rubble.

There are more than 2,200 volunteers in the White Helmets, mostly men but a growing number of women as well. The White Helmets are unpaid and unarmed, and they risk their lives to save others. More than 80 have been killed in the line of duty, the group says, largely because Syrian military aircraft often return for a "double-tap" - dropping bombs on the rescuers.

Wearing simple white construction helmets as feeble protection from those "double-tap" bombings, the White Helmets are strictly humanitarian. They even have rescued some of the officers of the regime of President Bashar Assad who are bombing them.

Every day there are scores of bombings or missile strikes across Syria - for months, the beautiful ancient city of Aleppo was enduring 50 attacks a day - and, each time, these are the crews that extinguish the fires and help the injured.

Since the White Helmets began in 2013, its members have saved more than 12,500 lives by its count. One video taken by the group shows White Helmets frantically

pulling aside rubble as a baby wails beneath. Finally, a rescuer is able to reach with his arm deep into a crevice and pull out an infant, crying lustily but not obviously injured.

A reputation for nonpolitical humanitarianism has allowed the White Helmets to work across lines of rival militias, including the Islamic State. In a land short of heroes and long on violence, many rally round the White Helmets. Syria may be notorious today for cruelty and suffering, but these men and women are a reminder of the human capacity for courage, strength and resilience.

"They have been doing extraordinary work in a terrible situation," notes Joshua Landis, a Syria expert at the University of Oklahoma in Norman.

"They are the real deal," says Lina Sergie Attar, a Syrian-American architect engaged in humanitarian aid in Syria.

One of the leaders of the White Helmets is Farouq al-Habib, 33, an English-speaking former banker with a doctorate in business. When the Syrian revolution began peacefully in 2011, he emerged as a leader of the movement in the city of Homs, thinking that, within a few months, the Assad regime would be overthrown.

It didn't work out that way, and Habib was imprisoned and tortured in 2012. Friends bribed the authorities to limit the torture and eventually free him, but the experience seared him. "Every day there were dead bodies from torture" in the prison, he said.

Now Habib helps manage the White Helmets, who survive on modest financing from the United States, Britain and private donors. Women were incorporated into the White Helmets last year, partly because some conservative Syrians didn't want men digging through rubble to find women who might not be fully dressed.

The White Helmets, also known as the Syrian Civil Defense, are campaigning to pressure Assad to stop dropping so-called barrel bombs,

which are full of shrapnel and take a tremendous toll on civilians. They argue that the West is so focused on the Islamic State that it is ignoring the far greater killing by Assad. "We can only ease the suffering of our people," says Raed Saleh, the chief of the White Helmets. "Only you in the international community can end it."

President Barack Obama's greatest foreign policy failing has been Syria. It's not clear that other approaches would have succeeded, but his policy and the world's have manifestly failed.

"When we started the revolution, we thought we shared the same values as the West," Habib said. "But I'm ashamed to say our friends failed us. We should have had friends like China, Russia, Iran, because they were credible."

Now Obama and other leaders are focused on military solutions in Syria. The problem is that there may not be one.

Arming rebels might have worked in 2012, but it may be too late now. Sadly, there are more problems in international relations than there are solutions.

But what we can do is provide more support for the White Helmets and, above all, do far more to help Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. The majority of Syrian refugee children are not attending school, according to the United Nations, and an entire generation of young Syrians is growing up impoverished, uneducated and, in some cases, radicalized. "They're going to be like the Palestinians, floating around the Middle East for decades," Landis warns. The United States is withdrawing troops from the Ebola fight in West Africa - a very successful deployment, for which Obama deserves credit - so how about now dispatching them on a temporary mission to Jordan to build schools for Syrian refugees? Contact Kristof at Facebook.com/Kristof, Twitter.com/Nick-Kristof or by mail at The New York Times, 620 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10018. □



Miss P, a 15-inch beagle, and handler William Alexander, react after winning the Best in Show at the Westminster Kennel Club dog show Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015, in New York. (AP Photo/Frank Franklin II)

Tail-wagging beagle wins best in show at Westminster

BEN WALKER

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A soft-spoken beagle really raised a ruckus. Wagging her tail a mile a minute, Miss P became America's top dog Tuesday night by winning best in show in a big surprise at the Westminster Kennel Club. At 4, Miss P is a grand-niece of Uno — in 2008, the immensely popular hound barked and bayed his way to becoming the only previous beagle to win at the most prominent U.S. dog show. Miss P, however, didn't let out a peep in the ring.

"She is a princess," handler Will Alexander said. A quiet one, too. Not your normal, everyday, vocal beagle, as most owners can attest. Instead, it was the packed crowd at Madison Square Garden that seemed to loudly gasp when judge David Merriam picked her in a dog show world shocker. Only a half-hour after her win did the 15-inch Miss P, a breed known as "big beagles," start making a noise. And that was only because her people were giving her treats. The best-of-seven final ring was full of favorites.

Matisse, a Portuguese water dog that's a cousin of President Barack Obama's family pet Sunny, was the top-winning male in show dog history with 238. Swagger the old English sheepdog finished second at Westminster in 2013 and clearly drew the biggest cheers. A Skye terrier came in second this time. A standard poodle, a shih tzu owned by notorious heiress Patty Hearst and an English springer spaniel also made it to the last ring. Miss P was the one that charmed Merriam. He is a retired California trial-

courts judge and has spent more than 50 years with dogs, but this was the first time he'd judged a best in show. "She never let me down. She didn't make any mistakes," Alexander said. There's no prize money for winning Westminster. Instead, there's prestige forever in dog circles, plus the possibility of lucrative breeding rights. The tri-colored Miss P also earned a full day Wednesday — appearances on morning TV shows, a meeting with Donald Trump, lunch at prominent Manhattan restaurant Sardi's and

a walk-on part in the Broadway hit musical "Kinky Boots." It was the 20th best in show win in the United States for the Canadian-born Miss P. The dog lives in both Milton and Enderby, British Columbia. Her call name is short for Peyton, and her official champion's name is Tashtins Lookin for Trouble. One of her owners is Eddie Dziuk, a co-owner of Uno. Her other co-owners are Lori Crandlemire and daughter Kaitlyn. Uno turns 10 in May and now lives in Texas with owner Caroline Dowell, across the street from her ranch. □